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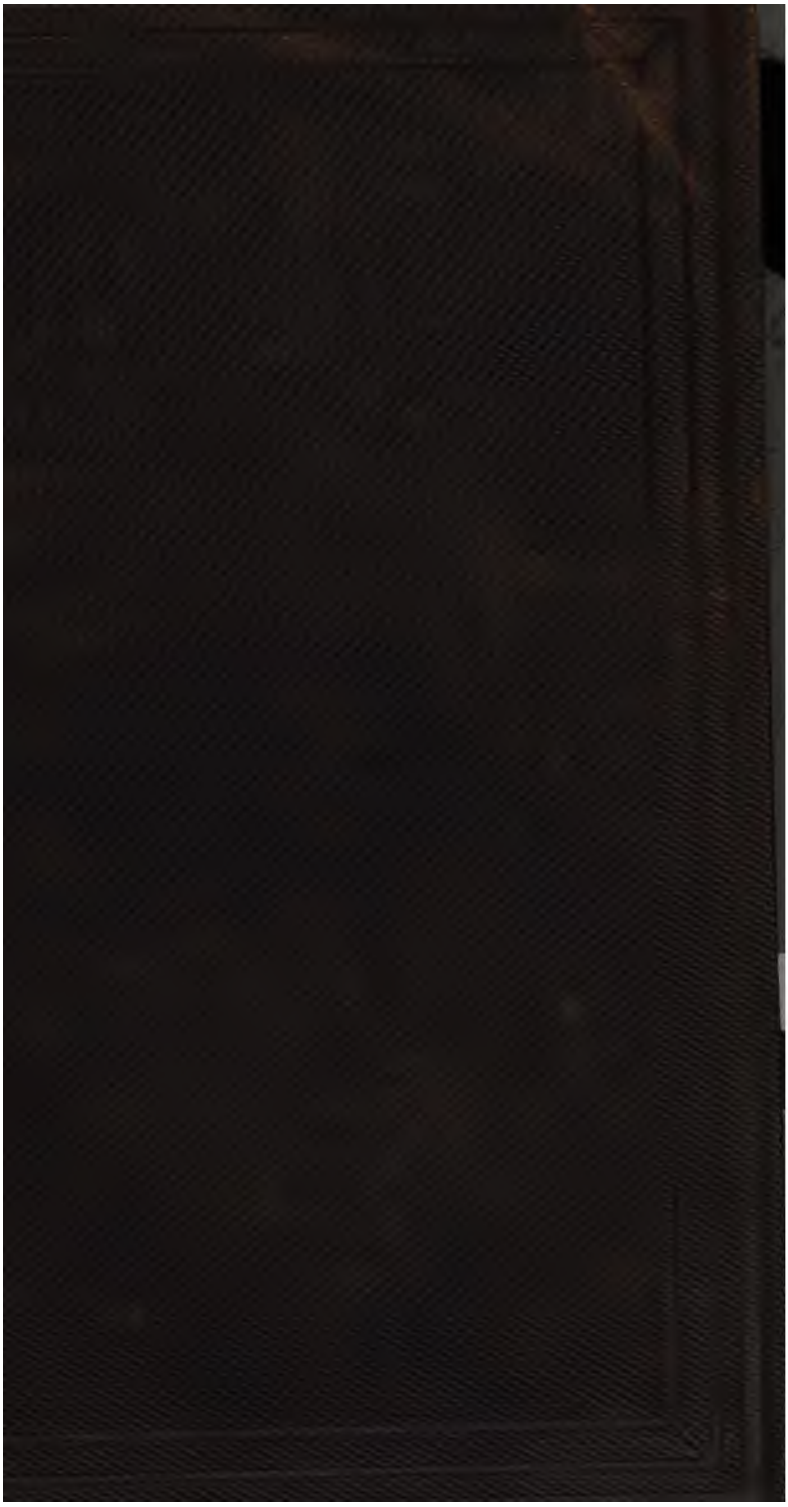

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THE

MASSACRES IN SYRIA.

THE

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THE

MASSACRES IN SYRIA.

BY

J. LEWIS FARLEY,

AUTHOR OF "TWO YEARS IN SYRIA," ETC.

SECOND EDITION.

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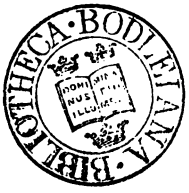
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PREFACE.

When the Janissaries, those fanatical tyrants who made and unmade sultans, were totally destroyed (June 15, 1826), Mahmoud II. exclaimed, "Henceforth I shall recognise the Moslem only in his mosque, the Christian in his church, and the Jew in his synagogue;" but the precepts of the Koran are held more sacred by the Mussulmans than a hatti-humayoun, or imperial rescript, and the benevolent intentions of that wise and far-sighted monarch have never been fulfilled.

In vain has the present Sultan declared his desire that all his subjects should live together like brothers; in vain has the hatti-humayoun of Feb. 18, 1856, proclaimed the equality of the Christian with the Turk; in vain have our ships defended the capital and our soldiers shed their blood in defence of a tottering empire;—for the

same feeling that inspired the followers of Abou-Bekr and his successors still lives in the heart of every true believer. "The Mussulmans alone are men," said Mohammed; "they have been chosen by God to know the truth; and the proof is, that I am in the midst of them. Despise every other nation, regard them with horror and disgust. They are impure; in you alone is purity."

These precepts, thus inculcated during 1200 years, cannot be suddenly eradicated, nor can the conquering lords of so many centuries look calmly upon the slave of yesterday as the equal of to-day. In European Turkey, where the Christians outnumber the Mussulmans, this feeling, it is true, is not so generally perceptible; but in Syria, where the Moslem element prevails, it exists in full vigour, and the poorest and meanest Moslem hamal, or porter, considers himself altogether a superior being to the best dressed and richest giaour whom he passes in the street; for has not Mohammed said, "The Mussulmans alone are men."

In considering, however, the events which have

recently taken place in Mount Lebanon and Damascus, we must not lose sight of the fact that all Mussulmans are not Turks, as, on the contrary, the Ottomans are in a considerable minority, and the hatred felt towards the Christians, by the various tribes and races inhabiting the country, is, in some instances, not more bitter than that which is entertained towards the government of the Sultan. Properly speaking, there is no Syrian nation, for the inhabitants of that beautiful land are comprised of races dissimilar in language, in manners, and in character. On her soil we find men who claim as their ancestors those warriors who fell in defence of the Cross at Acre and at Ascalon, and others who trace their descent from that valiant band of heroes who met their death on the shattered ramparts of Constantinople, fighting bravely beside their prince until overpowered and trodden down by the conquering hordes of the son of Amurath. Here are Latins as well as Greeks, Jews, Persians, Franks, and Arabs; Samaritans and Kedamécés; Turkomans and Bedawîns; Kurds and Druses; the Maronites and Metuâlis, both, alike, victims

of religious persecutions; the Ansayrians, who still practice the worship of Adonis; the Kelbiehs, who adore the dog; the Jezidis, who adore the devil; in fine, over all, the ruling race, the Ottomans. We must not, therefore, confound the latter with the former, nor attribute to them crimes in which they have not participated, and of which no one has expressed a greater indignation than His Majesty the Sultan himself.

Among those different races, mentioned above, the most remarkable are, without doubt, the Maronites and the Druses, with whose misfortunes and with whose cruelties the world has, lately, been made familiar. So much, however, has been said, and so much has been written upon the subject, that I should now hesitate placing these letters before the public,* were it not that I am anxious, if possible, to remove from the minds of Englishmen some very false impressions which they may, perhaps, entertain with regard to a people who have been for many

* Letters I. II. and IV. were originally contributed by me to the *Morning Post*. The other letters, although partially written at the dates indicated, are now published for the first time.

years the victims of cruel persecutions, and whose calamities have brought them in a prominent manner before the eyes of Europe. A residence for some time in Syria has afforded me many opportunities of knowing a good deal of the people, and I trust it will be considered that the following pages give a faithful and impartial record of the events which have recently taken place.

CONSTANTINOPLE,
April 20, 1861.

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MASSACRES IN SYRIA.

LETTER I.

THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *July* 11, 1860.

ON the 12th February, 1848, the Maronites of Syria forwarded a petition to the Government of Louis Philippe, imploring aid against their enemies, the Druses, and attributing all the calamities of the country to the momentary abandonment of Lebanon by France. "Behold," they say, "the cause of all our misfortunes—of our ruin unparalleled—of our blood so profusely shed—of the destruction of our homes—of the profanation of our churches—of the dishonour of our virgins—of the massacre of our children,

cut in two by the savage sword of the Druses." Twelve years have passed, and again these people, so odiously oppressed, send forth their piteous cry, not now to France alone, but to every nation in which the Cross is a sign of hope, and to every people to whom, like them, Christ is a Redeemer. On these mountains—where for centuries the Cross has risen triumphant above the Crescent—on whose rugged sides liberty has so often found a refuge, there is now displayed to the eyes of Europe a spectacle far more melancholy than any of those with which history has made us acquainted; and deeds are being enacted equally as bloody and as cruel as any of those perpetrated 1200 years ago by the remorseless Khaled, or the ferocious Abou-Bekr.

Every one who has ascended the sloping sides of Lebanon must have been struck with the energy of the people, and have remarked how successfully the industry of the inhabitants has triumphed over the inequalities of the ground and the other natural difficulties with which they have had to contend. At Bshirrai, on a very elevated situation on Mount Lebanon, not far

from its summit, and where nature seems to afford nothing for the sustenance of the inhabitants, numerous Christian villages flourish and every inch of ground is cultivated. The town is surrounded with fruit trees, mulberry plantations, vineyards, and fields of grain, though there is scarcely a natural plain twenty feet square. But the inhabitants meet this difficulty by building terraces, and thus with singular industry secure a portion of level ground to prevent the earth from being swept down by the winter rains, retaining at the same time the water requisite for the irrigation of their crops. By dint of skill and labour, they have compelled a rocky soil to become fertile. Sometimes, to avail themselves of the waters, they have made a channel for them by means of a thousand windings on the declivities, or have arrested them in the valley by embankments. At other times they have propped up the earth that was ready to roll down by terraces and walls, so that the mountains present the appearance of a staircase or of an amphitheatre, each tier of which is a row of vines or mulberry trees, of which Volney mentions that he

had counted from 100 to 120 tiers from the bottom of the valley to the top of the hill.* On these noble mountains are the homes of those ancient Christians of the sixth century called Maronites, from the name of one of their apostles. They number 170,000; their arms are chiefly the simple instruments used in their industrial occupations, while their turbulent neighbours, the Druses, numbering only 80,000, with yataghans in their hands, guns upon their shoulders, pistols in their belts, and fanatical hatred in their hearts, devour and destroy, like tigers, the produce of their toil, and leave their happy homes in desolation and in flames.

It was but the other day that Hasbeiya was a peaceful village; the men were busy on the mountain sides; the women and children were carrying the leaves of the white mulberry to the silk-worm sheds, when suddenly the Druses surrounded the place on all sides. Fathers, husbands, brothers, rushed to the defence of those they loved, and despair gave them a courage

* Volney—Urquhart.

which their barbarous enemies could not contemn. The Druses hesitated to advance, but demanded that the Maronites should lay down their arms. These unfortunate Christians appealed to the commander of the Turkish troops in the vicinity, but he insisted upon the demand of the Druses being complied with, stating that on that condition he would guarantee the safety of the place and its inhabitants. The arms were given up, and sent off by the Turkish commander to Damascus; on the way they were seized by the Druses. The people took refuge in the Emir's palace, which was immediately forced by the Druses, and men, women, and children were butchered to the number of 1000. This is a civilised age, and yet the descendants of those who fought and fell 800 years ago upon Syria's plains for the defence of the Cross, look calmly on and lend not a hand to save.

What will the Turkish Government do in order to put a stop to this frightful state of things? They can do nothing. It is idle to waste time in useless negotiations. It will be much better if the European Powers cease for a time their own

dissensions, and, having a common object in view, insist that the Porte shall treat the Lebanon as it has treated Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia, and permit the Maronites to govern themselves. To attain this object an end must be put to the intolerable state of these mixed villages of the mountains, for there can be no hope of the pacification of the Lebanon as long as those perfidious enemies of the Christians are permitted to remain. The Druses, naturally marauders and adventurers —men without faith and without pity, and of whose crimes history has given us so many examples—must be sent to a distance. They must give up the land which in their hands is unproductive, receiving, if necessary, such compensation from the Maronites as may be decided upon. Then the Lebanon will become really free; and then, thanks to the industry of its inhabitants, and to their guaranteed security, a new era of peace and prosperity will commence for these people who for twelve centuries have been so cruelly oppressed.

His Excellency Fuad Pasha, minister of foreign affairs, leaves here to-morrow for Beyrout. He

has received full powers from the Sultan to take such measures as may be necessary for the pacification of the province, but, without foreign aid, I have not the slightest hope that any good whatever can possibly arise from his mediation.

LETTER II.

THE MARONITES AND THE DRUSES.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *July* 18, 1860.

AT the present moment, when the civil war in the Lebanon has assumed such vast proportions, and when the awful sufferings of the Maronites on the one hand, and the barbarous cruelties committed by the Druses on the other, fill us at the same time with compassion and with horror, it may not be uninteresting to take a short review of the origin and character of the two races that figure so prominently in the bloody tragedy which is now being enacted before the eyes of Christians.

The origin of the Maronites is differently accounted for by history. Some annalists confound them with the Mardaïtes, an ancient but not indigenous people of Syria, who, with the ordinary virtues of mountaineers — sobriety,

courage, love of independence—possessed also a certain spirit of adventure, which, on many occasions, led them to undertake distant expeditions. These Mardaïtes occupied a district of Cœlo-Syria, called Maronia, from which, it is supposed, came the name of Maronites. This historical assertion is, however, subject to much doubt, inasmuch as no ancient geographer mentions this particular district of Cœlo-Syria; and it appears impossible that one of those immense valleys stretching between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon should have been unknown to the different nations who in turn conquered Syria, from the time of the Greeks under Alexander to the Romans under Titus. Be that, however, as it may; whether the Maronites were formed from a colony of those Mardaïtes who occupied the mountains of Lebanon from remote antiquity, or from an immigration of proscribed Christians at the time of the Persian conquest, and subsequently increased by further emigrants at the time of the Mussulman invasion, it is however certain that towards the end of the seventh century they were of very considerable import-

ance in Syria; so much so that the Caliph Moawiah was obliged to treat with them; and their possessions, according to the historian, Theophanus, extended from Mount Taurus at the northern extremity of Syria even into Galilee as far as the environs of Jerusalem. The Maronite historians themselves give the following account of the origin of their nation:—

Under the episcopacy of John, vicar of the Pope in the East, certain wandering Christians settled at Byblos, now Djebail, a small seaport situated between Tripoli and Beyrout. These Christians sent a deputation to John requesting him to send them a bishop; and accordingly he appointed a certain monk named Maroun, who at that time was living in a monastery established on the banks of the Orontes. The principality of Byblos included a great part of the Lebanon, and possessed two very important towns, namely, Byblos and Botrys. Maroun was named bishop of Botrys. As learned as he was humble, and deeply concerned for the moral interests of his flock, he resolved not to permit among the mountaineers of whom he was the pastor any of those

numerous and contradictory sects who at that time disputed with each other for religious supremacy in the capitals of the Byzantine empire—at Constantinople, at Alexandria, and Antioch. Being already distinguished by his writings against the doctrines of Nestorius and Eutychus, it was easy for him to refute all the new doctrines which were tending rapidly to divide Christianity, and his services became so useful to the Church that he soon received the title of Patriarch of the Lebanon. This excellent man did not content himself with giving moral aid to those who were threatened with heretical contagion—he heaped temporal benefits upon all those whom he encountered, and whom he, by his good deeds, attracted towards his hospitable mountains. He practised in its fullest extent the true charity of the Gospel. His virtues and his beneficence increased in a short time the numerical strength of the principality of which he was the patriarch. The proscribed Christians of all the neighbouring countries, the oppressed, the slaves of idolators, all came in crowds to seek a refuge behind the inaccessible peaks of Lebanon,

in the midst of the people so well organised and so well protected by Maroun. This worthy pastor became at length so dear to them that they took the name of Maronites, in order to express, with their gratitude for their religious chief, the spirit of independence and charity which ought for ever to distinguish their society. Maroun had chosen for his residence the monastery of Kanobin, founded by Theodosius the Great, situated in the beautiful valley of Tripoli, watered by the Nahr-Kadir, the Holy River; and from thence he watched over his people, and there he continued to occupy himself for their future welfare.

That which proves this bishop to have been a true pastor of men is, that he did not content himself with religious exhortations, or even examples of brotherly love; he also encouraged his people in manual labour, and excited them to military discipline. Thus, thanks to him, filled with a love of independence, and sincerely attached to their religion, the Maronites repulsed with vigour the first bands of Arabs that spread themselves over the country. In defending

themselves they learned the art of war, and thus they soon became able soldiers, skilful archers, and excellent horsemen; so that at last, not content with repulsing foreign invasion, they began to increase their own possessions, until they finally established themselves from Mount Taurus in the north to Mount Carmel in the south.

When they met with too much resistance from the Arabs, they sought refuge in the deep caverns of the Anti-Lebanon, or behind the natural fortresses of their mountains; and, guided by their bishop, they occupied themselves with the arts of peace. Thus they built Baskhoutah, upon the eastern extremity of the Lebanon, midway upon the chain of mountains overlooking the luxuriant valley of the Bekaa: then Haddeth was erected by them in one of the shady valleys of the Nahr-Kadir; and, lastly, Bshirrai, the best situated of the three, surrounded by mountains, which protected it alike from the ravages of the tempest and the incursions of the barbarians.

When the Arabs had conquered Syria, their rapid victory at first spread terror over the

Lebanon. The Maronites, however, fortified themselves, and permitted the storm to pass over. But when, at length, the Mussulman forces were dispersed over the world, when the enemies of Christianity diminished in number and hardihood, the Maronites again showed themselves beyond their frontiers, and commenced with the Mahomedans a war which ceased no more. The Maronites no longer enjoyed peace, and when the great cities of Syria suspended hostilities, these brave men did not succumb; they never laid down their arms, and, according to the traditions of the country, it was from their determined persistence in acting independently, that they were called by the Arabs the "rebels," and that the Government of the Caliphs treated them as mortal enemies.

Jean Maroun died about the year 660; his people regretted him and revered his memory. But he had lived long enough to finish his work, by constituting a society more durable than many others, because it was founded upon fraternity and a love of independence. For 1200 years have the descendants of those men pre-

served their faith—for 1200 years have they raised aloft on these glorious mountains the standard of the Cross; and although often defeated and beaten back, yet have they still nobly held it triumphant over the Crescent. That veneration for their faith, that feeling of brotherhood, that spirit of independence which animated their ancestors, still lives amongst them; and thus it is that the Druses of the nineteenth century, like the Arabs of the seventh, treat them as mortal enemies.

The Druses also preserve to this day those qualities which characterised their ancestors. The same ferocity, the same love of plunder, the same thirst for blood, clearly prove how well they have preserved their criminal origin, and how closely they still imitate the cruel deeds of their founder, Hakem-Bi-Amr-Allah.

Hakem, when only eleven years of age, succeeded to the Caliphate of Cairo in the year of the Hegira 386, A.D. 996. The first circumstance that showed his character in its true light was an act of vengeance. From the commencement of his reign, a descendant of Hescham, one of the

last princes of the dynasty of Ommiades, had valiantly fought against the numerous troops of the Caliph, but at length, being overpowered by superior numbers, he was taken prisoner, and brought before the young Hakem. Youth usually finds it easy to forget wrongs, and to pardon them, but the Caliph of fifteen years showed himself pitiless and cruel. Youth seldom loves to look on agony, but Hakem announced to his prisoner that he would assist in person at his punishment. The imagination of youth is usually cheerful and happy, but that of the young despot occupied itself during eight days in meditating for his enemy such a death as would be the most cruel, and at the same time the most shameful. He was somewhat perplexed between the various tortures that his ferocious imagination suggested, but at length Hakem decided upon that which presented in its atrocity sufficient of the ridiculous to enliven the execution. He ordered his captive to be bound hand and foot upon a camel, and behind him he placed a monkey, remarkable for its viciousness, which, striking its victim on the nape of the neck with a

stone, inflicted upon him a lingering and painful death, amidst bursts of laughter from the young executioner.

This, however, was only the commencement of the devilish career of this Mussulman despot, for soon, the fierce desire of committing evil developed itself more and more, until at length he became the most odious of tyrants. Full of suspicion against women, he ordered that they should never leave their apartments; and gave directions that the shoemakers throughout his empire should be interdicted from making shoes or boots for their use. He went so far as to shut them up like birds in a cage, and allowed them to receive food only through a small door in their prison, in such a manner as they could not be seen by those who waited on them; and it is even said that one day as he passed along the street, hearing the laughter of women proceeding from the interior of a public bath, he immediately caused the doors of the building to be fastened up, and enjoyed himself in listening to the despairing cries of his numerous victims. He considered the Christians as an inferior race,

and ordered the Mussulmans to treat them as a conquered people. He passed sumptuary laws, by which the Jews were obliged to carry round their necks a block of wood of the form of a calf's head, in memory of the worship condemned by the prophets, while the Christians were compelled to carry also round their necks a wooden cross, a cubit and a half in length and four pounds in weight. At length, as if to complete his follies, he caused himself to be proclaimed a divinity, and the founder of a new religion, which was entirely to set aside that of Mohammed. Prophets were found who declared their belief in his divine origin, the principal of whom was a certain Mohammed Nechteghin, a Turk by birth, and surnamed Dursi. From this man, as violent as he was depraved, the Druses have taken their names.*

Hakem was assassinated in the year of the Hegira 411, by his Vizier Hamsi, who took possession of the throne, and continued to maintain the new faith. Subsequent caliphs, however, persecuted the followers of Hakem; and rather

* Volney—d'Herbelot—David.

than renounce their absurb and immoral doctrine they fled to Syria, where, spreading themselves over the Lebanon, they soon became the scourge and terror of the Christians. The Maronites defended themselves bravely, but at length they were obliged to retire farther into their mountains, and abandon a portion of their lands to those ferocious and perfidious men, who are the true ancestors of the present Druses.

Plainly, indeed, do the present race of Druses display their origin. Since the 29th of May last they have burnt and destroyed upwards of 150 Christian villages, and sent forth more than 75,000 Christian men, women, and children without food or clothing. At Hasbeiya, where the Christians, after heavy losses, took refuge in the palace of the Emîr S'aad-ed-Dîn Shehâb, the Druses insisted on their delivering up their arms. The Christians, well knowing the treachery of their enemies, hesitated, but the Turkish soldiers told them that, in case of refusal, they would fire upon them. Thus situated, the Christians were compelled to submit; and then breaking into the palace, the Druses, crying aloud, "The blood of

the Christians," put to indiscriminate and brutal slaughter more than 800 men, women, and children. At Deir-el-Kamr similar atrocities were committed. A correspondent from Beyrout says:—"I have seen one of the women of Deir-el-Kamr, who has a deep gash in her thigh. The wound was caused by the said thigh being used as a block to chop off the head of her infant boy of three days old. Another poor woman tried to cover her child, saying that it was a girl. The Druses found out it was a boy, and stabbed it through the mother's body." The same correspondent says:—"All that day and night the work of pillage and blood went on. Towards evening the Turkish soldiers took part with the Druses. Men were murdered, male children torn to pieces, women abused (the latter only by the troops), and houses burned. Towards daybreak a body of 600 Christians took refuge in the Seraï, or Government house, having been invited to do so by the governor. When the Druses discovered this, some hours later, they rushed towards the building, where the military authorities and the governor of the town received

them with open arms and delivered to them the Maronite refugees, whom they—the Druses—killed like sheep. Of all the 600 persons one man alone escaped, a certain Boulos Soussa. The court was, even two days afterwards, a foot deep in blood."

A telegram was received here yesterday from Smyrna, stating that a Mussulman rising had taken place at Damascus on the 9th inst. Four hundred Christians were reported killed and wounded. Several convents and churches were burned, the American consul wounded, and the English and French consuls compelled to fly.

Further details relative to the above *émeute* have just been received. The number of Christians killed and wounded was, it is said, 500; and besides the injury done to the convents and churches, the French, Austrian, and Greek consulates were sacked and burned to the ground. The consuls and their families fled to the house of Abd-el-Kader, who protected them from personal outrage.*

* Subsequent accounts state the total number of killed during the massacre to have been 8000.

The receipt of this intelligence has, as may well be supposed, created the most serious anxieties on all sides. His Highness Aali Pasha, after interviews with Sir Henry Bulwer and M. de Lavalette, has had a long audience of the Sultan, the result of which is, it is said, that the Porte, besides despatching an additional battalion from Thessaly and another from Batoum, proposes to ask the Viceroy of Egypt to send an auxiliary contingent of 10,000 men into Syria to aid in accomplishing the prompt and complete pacification of the province.

LETTER III.

THE MASSACRES AT RASHEIYA, HASBEIYA, AND DEIR-EL-KAMR.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *July* 25, 1860.

FROM the first days of the Hegira even to the present moment, Syria has ever been an easy prey for the ambitious. Her fertile plains, so enriched by Heaven and coveted by man, have been, from the earliest times, the scene of many contests, and the battle-field on which the destinies of kings have been decided. Nowhere, perhaps, have conquerors desolated with a wilder havoc, or extorted with a more grasping avarice; nowhere have the cruelties and fury of the savage soldier wrought more disastrous effects. Within the last twelve hundred years, at least a hundred different changes have come over this beautiful land; government succeeding government, tyrant following tyrant, each more despotic than the

last. From the sandy deserts of the south, and from the snowy regions of the north, fierce bands of adventurers have issued forth in succession, passing over her surface like a desolating torrent, and leaving behind only ashes and ruins. But all the deeds of blood and rapine by which, from time to time, the country has been scourged, sink into insignificance when compared with the barbarities that have been now committed; and the cruelties of Tamerlane, and the fratricidal madness of Selim, fail to awaken in our minds the same feelings of horror, disgust, and indignation with which we are impressed at the deliberate and cold-blooded atrocities of the Druses. We can easily imagine the excesses that may have been perpetrated in the sixteenth century, by a barbarian monarch, flushed with success and conquest; but we cannot in the year 1860, calmly contemplate the miserable spectacles of unoffending and unarmed Christians being ruthlessly butchered; of matrons and virgins violated; of children dragged from the mother's breast, and torn in two before their parents' eyes; of villages in flames; of cherished homes in ashes. We

read, with a shudder, of those inhuman exhibitions where men were obliged to slaughter each other for the amusement of the Roman people, and where, in the arena, captives fought with savage beasts, made still more savage by hunger; but still, these captives were not altogether deprived of hope, for they had a good sword wherewith to defend themselves, and when they did fall, they fell fighting to the last for life and liberty. But at the present day, when civilisation has shed its softening influence over the world, we behold the generals of a sovereign in friendly relations with Christian states, deliberately disarming their own fellow-subjects, shutting them up in fortresses, and then letting in fierce and savage monsters in human form to butcher and destroy them, solely because these unfortunate people preferred to follow the precepts of the Gospel as taught by Christ, rather than the doctrines of the Koran as inculcated by Mohammed.

The 29th of May, 1860, will be chronicled as a memorable day, not alone in the history of Syria, but also in the annals of the Ottoman Empire; and future historians will, perhaps, date from thence

the rise and proper development of the Christian population, or the decline and fall of that despotic power which, now for upwards of four centuries, has held its rule in the ancient capital of Constantine.

On that day, Khorsheed Pasha, governor-general of Sidon, and representative of the Sultan in Syria, proceeded from his residence in Beyrout to the Turkish camp at the foot of Lebanon. The guns of the artillery proclaimed his Excellency's arrival, and the thunder of the cannon reverberated amongst the mountains, echoing in the recesses of the distant hills. But scarcely had the last sound died away, when the guns of the Druses began "to speak," and the flames from the burning village of Beit-Miry rose up against the sky: a deep meaning answer to the ostentatious salute of the Pasha. The work of carnage and destruction had begun, and before the sun had set beyond the placid waters of the Mediterranean, two and thirty villages were reduced to ashes, and their inhabitants either foully murdered, or compelled to seek an uncertain shelter in the caves of Lebanon.

The Christians were totally unprepared for this sudden attack upon them, as, in accordance with the orders of Khorsheed Pasha, they had kept perfectly quiet, and abstained from everything in any way calculated to provoke a conflict. "As we have done from the beginning," says the Maronite Patriarch, in his memorial to the Pasha, "we have again renewed our warning and positive injunctions to all the Christians to keep quiet, and abstain aloof from everything calculated to bring on collisions or agitation. They have universally listened to our advice, and showed due submission to your noble orders, and have not made a single step tending to the most trifling contest or commotion, but have kept in their homes and in places at a distance from the scene of warfare, waiting the fulfilment of what was promised by your Excellency in the way of due repression and reparation. But, on the other hand, the Druses have acted in the contrary sense; for, after the proclamation of your orders, and after the resolution come to as above-mentioned, they have fallen upon the Christians of the small district of Djezzin whilst they were

living peaceably in their houses, attacked them treacherously, and killed all those whom they could overtake, men, women, and children, as well as priests, monks, and nuns. They have pillaged, burnt, and destroyed their goods, their churches, and their convents, and dispersed the inhabitants. They have sacked and plundered the rest of the Christians scattered among the Druses within the three Akleems and dispersed them. Likewise in the Shoof, Garbi-el-Bekaa, the Arkoob, Monassif, Shahbar, Djurd, Garb, the plain of Beyrout, and the Meten."

Again, in a letter to Consul General Moore, the Patriarch further says:—"The Christians have given an irrecusable proof of their obedience to the orders of your Excellency, and adhesion to your counsels, in abstaining from engaging in collisions and hostilities. But the Druses, on the contrary, have not refrained, nor would it seem that they are disposed to refrain from their aggressive movements, which have become intolerable. This overwhelms us with surprise, for how could they have ventured to act in this manner in opposition to the orders of the

authorities, and how could the Government tolerate their openly proceeding to the length they have done?"

Thus completely unprepared, and taken advantage of at all points, the Christians fled in confusion and dismay from their burning homes, hoping to find an asylum either in Sidon or Beyrout. But the Druses, emboldened by the presence of Khorsheed Pasha and his troops, advanced on the 30th to within an hour's distance of the latter town, stormed the villages of Hadeth and Bhabda, and put to indiscriminate slaughter all those who were unable to escape their fury. The Emir, Beshir-el-Kassim, formerly Governor of Lebanon, a man eighty-five years of age, and completely blind, fell beneath the swords of the Bashi-Bazouks; while the inhabitants, who sought safety in flight, were, it is said, fired upon by the Turkish soldiers. The Christians from Djezzin and other villages, who fled towards Sidon, were intercepted within sight of the town by the Druses and Moslems, and on the morning of the 1st of June, 300 mutilated bodies, including those of twenty priests, were seen scattered

over the plain. The women were shamefully ill-treated, and those who succeeded in at length reaching shelter, were found to have been stripped even to their under garments. The Christians who had collected together from various parts of the mountain in the village of Damour, left during the night for Beyrout, but on their way, they were attacked by a strong body of Druses and Metawalis, and only a few reached the wished-for goal. The woods of Jeba and elsewhere were set on fire, the caves were everywhere searched, and those unfortunate fugitives who survived exposure and want, fell beneath the dagger and the sword. The convents of Deir-el-Mukhallis were pillaged by Cassim Youssef, Lieutenant of Said Djoublat, the great Druse Sheikh of Mukhtârah, and his followers; the church, in which had been accumulated the treasures of 175 years, was plundered, and the cups of gold and silver, crosses inlaid with precious stones, vestments, books, &c., either stolen or destroyed; the cattle belonging to the surrounding villages were carried off, and the inhabitants brutally murdered. Some Christians who had hastily

armed themselves for defence, were defeated and driven back towards Sidon, but on their approach, the Mufti, Cadi, and other magistrates rushed to the gates, crying out, "The Christians are come! Help against the infidel!" None were allowed to enter the city, and the people and the soldiers looked on at the cruel massacre of the Ghiaour. Even simple shepherds, and travellers, men, women, and children, ignorant of what had taken place, were refused admittance into Sidon, and subsequently fell a prey to the marauders who were ravaging the plains.

On the 1st of June, the English, French, and Austrian Consuls-General proceeded to the camp of Khorsheed Pasha, in order to induce him to take immediate measures for the suppression of the pillage and murders which were going on around him. He said that he had done everything in his power to stop bloodshed, and that if the Consuls-General would induce Bishop Tubia to restrain the Christians, he would answer for the Druses. At the moment, however, when the Pasha was making this promise, he was well aware that Deir-el-Kamr had been, for some days

past, closely blockaded by the Druses, yet he never moved one step in its defence; and, although only five hours' distance, he permitted that town to be attacked and taken on the following day, the 2nd of June.

On the 28th of May, our Consul-General, Mr. Moore, had received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Bird, American Missionary at Deir-el-Kamr, beseeching him to aid its unfortunate inhabitants.

"The chief men of Deir-el-Kamr," says Mr. Bird, "requested an interview with me this morning, and acquainted me with the state of things. They have before them the horrors of aggressive warfare or of famine. Even now the standing corn is no longer private property. The Christians of the neighbouring villages have fled here for refuge. The supplies are all cut off. The people of the place have done what they could to prevent a war; they do not wish it. They implore and beseech you to make it possible for them to purchase necessary food. Cannot Government convoy mule-loads of flour or wheat from Beyrout?

"Must they be left to the fearful alternative of

earning their bread by their good swords and muskets? If they can have provisions they intend to keep quiet, and have no fears of the Druses. If not, they must go forth to attack them, and who can tell the issue? The Druses seem most evidently the aggressors in this region at least, and the people of this place have received commendatory letters from the Pasha on account of their forbearance. They were promised that the roads would be kept open if they would keep quiet. All seems empty words.

"With the citizens of this place I would beseech you to use your utmost efforts to save precious life. Help them in their extremity if it be possible. There are provisions for only a few days longer, as I am credibly informed. Many even now cannot get bread to eat."

Even before the receipt of this letter, Mr. Moore had represented the very critical position of Deir-el-Kamr to Khorsheed Pasha, and his Excellency then promised to forward provisions without any further delay, and to, at once, open a communication with the town. But these promises were never redeemed, and on the 2nd of

June, Deir-el-Kamr surrendered to the Druses under the command of Beshir Bey Neked.

This town, formerly the capital of Lebanon, contained a population of about 8000 souls. It suffered considerably, fifteen years ago, during the war which, at that time, raged between the Christians and Druses; but, since then, it had recovered its ancient prosperity, and was considered one of the wealthiest and most thriving villages of the Mountain. The houses, built along the steep side of a rocky hill, and the terraces raised one above another from the bottom of the glen, cultivated to the top and covered with vine, olive, and mulberry plantations, presented a most beautiful and picturesque appearance, and evidenced, in a remarkable manner, the industry and perseverance of its inhabitants. Upon the first attack made by the Druses, the Christians were successful, and drove back their enemies, the besieged losing twenty-five men, while the besiegers left one hundred killed behind them. Some barricades were then thrown up in order to defend the entrance to the town, but the Druses, having received reinforcements, rushed

in with overwhelming numbers, and, although the Christians valiantly defended every inch of ground, were at length victorious. Want of provisions compelled an unconditional surrender, and then about 150 houses were burned to the ground by the assailants, who, when they had sufficiently satisfied their propensities for plunder, retired upon the villages of Rasheiya and Hasbeiya.

Rasheiya and Hasbeiya, numbering respectively 3000 and 5000 inhabitants, have been, for centuries, ruled by Moslem Emirs of the princely house of Shehâb, relatives of the renowned Emir Beshir, who governed in Lebanon until 1840. From Emir Effendi, governor of Rasheiya, and Emir S'aad-ed-Dîn, governor of Hasbeiya, the Christians have invariably received kindness and support; and the consequence has been a deep and bitter feeling of hatred and resentment on the part of the Druses. To protect himself and his Christian people, Emir S'aad-ed-Dîn, some time ago, induced Achmed Pasha, governor of Damascus, to garrison Hasbeiya and Rasheiya with a Turkish regiment of 800 troops, and, when

threatened by the Druses, the commanding officer assured him that there was nothing to fear, as, if the inhabitants remained quiet, he and his soldiers would defend them. On the 3rd of June, the Druses attacked Hasbeiya, but were repulsed by Emir S'aad-ed-Dîn. The war-cry had gone forth, however, to the Haurân, and Ismail-el-Atrash, with his savage followers, appeared upon the scene. Rasheiya was burned to the ground, and the Christian inhabitants were put to the sword under circumstances of unparalleled barbarity; while the aged Emir Effendi, with his entire family, was brutally murdered. Male children were slaughtered in their, mothers' arms, and women, in many instances, were killed while vainly endeavouring to save their offspring.* Ali Bey Hamâdee,

* The following statement, made by a few survivors from the massacre at Rasheiya, may be read with some interest :—

"You are already acquainted with the massacre of our co-religionists, and the sacking, pillage, and burning of our houses. The circumstances are so frightful that we cannot find words to describe them. We beg, however, to give you briefly the following narrative.

"It began thus :—

"Ten muleteers, belonging to the adjoining village of Deir-el-Kamr, were going to Damascus, carrying earthenware; these

secretary of Saîd Djoublat, sent for Osman Bey, colonel of the Turkish troops, who, after a short

were met by a band of Druses in the vicinity of Kefr-kouk, who fired upon them, killing two of them ; the rest fled. Their relatives at Deir-el-Kamr, upon hearing the news, went and brought the bodies of the two murdered men, and collected the eight fugitives, and forthwith waited upon the colonel of the Turkish regulars quartered at Rasheiya, as well as upon Emir Ali Shehâb, the governor of the district, and brought the case to their knowledge. An inquest, by their order, was held on the bodies of the two murdered men, and subsequently a police force, under the order of a Shehâb Emir, was sent to the village of Kefr-kouk and arrested two of the delinquents, brought them to Rasheiya, and put them in prison. Two days afterwards, the Druses of the town of Rasheiya and its neighbourhood required peremptorily the release of the prisoners. The governor and colonel gave way to this demand, and set them at liberty. The Druses then threatened the Christians of Deir-el-Kamr with vengeance, and that they would kill them and burn their village, and took asylum at Rasheiya. On the following day, Saturday, before noon, the Druses of Rasheiya and its environs proceeded to Deir-el-Kamr and set fire to it, burning all the houses after pillaging them. On Sunday they attacked the village Haoush, killed several men, and pillaged all the houses of the Christians ; and the same day went to another village, Beit Labia, disarmed the Christians there, and killed several. On the Monday following, the Druses attacked Kefr-Meshki, disarmed the Christians, pillaged and burnt their houses, and killed the priest and some Christians there. The Druses held a meeting that afternoon, and resolved to attack the town of Rasheiya. A person came to give the Christians warning. The priests and elders of Rasheiya waited immediately upon the chiefs of the Arian

interview, returned to Hasbeiya, and told the people that the Druses were determined to kill them as well as the inhabitants of all the surrounding villages, but that if the Christians came

family (the principal family among the Druses of Rasheiya, and relatives of Arian Pasha), and informed them of the designs of the Druses. These chieftains summoned their co-religionists in the town, and those of the neighbouring villages, and confronted them at a meeting with their Christian townspeople, at which meeting the Christians received assurances of goodwill and pacific intentions. The chiefs subsequently accompanied them to the Mudir (governor), Emir Ali Shehâb, as well as to the Turkish colonel, and repeated before these two functionaries that they should be witness of these assurances. The latter afterwards issued a proclamation in the town, that nobody should be afraid, and to live in peace; and the Christians felt more assured: but in the evening of that same day the Druses attacked the town on four different sides, and set fire to the houses of the Christians, killing and pillaging. The slaughter continued till noon of the next day, Wednesday. Those who could not fly were killed; but a great number of men took refuge, together with their families, in the Seraï (government house) at Rasheiya, seeking the protection of the Turkish troops, where they continued in safety till Sunday. That day the Druse chiefs invited the colonel to a meeting they were holding at the village of Teltaté, in the vicinity of Rasheiya. On his return, he intimated to the Christian refugees not to move from the Seraï. On Monday arrived before Rasheiya the Druses of the Hauran, under Ismail-el-Atrash, Waked-el-Hemdan, Hezimé Henydé, Abou Ali Hannawy, Beit-en-Nawafli, Beit-el-Kalâani, and Halil Agha, chief of Din-Ali. A portion of these tribes

into Hasbeiya with their valuables and moveable property, he would protect them. The next day, the Druses burned the village of Kufair, and murdered those who still clung to their homes. The people of the other villages no longer hesitated, and immediately sought protection in Hasbeiya. For greater security, Osman Bey induced the Christians to take refuge in the Serai or government house, and then he insisted that they should deliver up their arms. "Give me your arms," said he, "and I shall then consider it my duty to protect you." Relying on his pro-

went to Aayha, burnt the church there, and killed some Christians whom they found still remaining. The Druses, in a body, then entered the Serai, killed the Christian refugees, the clergy included, without sparing any except the females. The number of men massacred is about 900. The churches were all burnt and sacked, and the altars defiled.

"In short, our houses are reduced to ashes, the bodies of the massacred are in heaps like the corn on the threshing-floors. The widows and orphans, with the few men who escaped the massacre, are now dispersed in the wilderness, exposed to hunger, fears, and destitution.

"We, therefore, venture to make this appeal to you, sir, on behalf of the survivors, beseeching you in the name of humanity to extend to them relief for their safety and subsistence, as they are left without anything in the world, and to save them from their present perilous condition."

mise, they delivered up their arms, which were at once packed and sent off on mules to Damascus. The Druses, however, having intercepted and seized them, returned to Hasbeiya. The gates of the Seraï were thrown open by Osman Bey, the Druses rushed in, and with a united shout of "The blood of the Christians!" ruthlessly and barbarously murdered men, women, and children to the number of 800. Some women and children took refuge in the harem of Sitt Naisie, sister of Saîd Djoublat, and a few men, who had concealed themselves under heaps of slain, escaped during the night, and found their way to Damascus.

The Druses, now excited by success, rendered more savage by the blood which they had shed, and reinforced by hordes of Metawâlis, Kurds, and Arabs, rushed like maddened tigers upon Zahleh, the most important, and most prosperous town in Lebanon. The inhabitants made preparations for defence, and during six days, 2000 Christians held in check 12,000 of their enemies.

On the 9th of June, the Bishops of Zahleh sent

a memorial to the European Consuls-General, requesting their interference with Khorsheed Pasha, in order to avert the threatened attack of the Druses. "It must have become known to you," they say, "that total ruin and destruction have been brought on the Christians of the Mountain and other places by the Druses, so that they, the Christians, have become utterly destitute of the means of subsistence. Now we have ascertained that a large body of Druses from the Haurân, Hasbeiya, Rasheiya, and other places, is coming to reinforce those of the Mountain for the purpose of attacking and destroying the town of Zahleh, and after two or three days they will effect a junction with each other in our neighbourhood.

"Some of the Druses of the Lebanon are quartered now in a place two hours and a half distant from us. We therefore beg of you in your Christian zeal, to interest and exert yourselves with the government, for preventing this attack upon your servants, inhabitants of Zahleh, as, which God forbid, should Zahleh be destroyed, there will remain no name for the Christians in this country.

The enemy are doing their best to destroy it for that purpose, as its inhabitants are all Christians, and to enable the Druses to appropriate to themselves all Christian property in this country."

Again did the Consuls-General proceed to the Pasha's camp, and again did they receive promises of assistance for the beleagured Christians. This time, however, the promises were fulfilled, and 500 regular troops were despatched on the 16th of June to the defence of Zahleh.

On Monday, the 18th, a combined attack of the Druses of Lebanon and of the Haurân was made on the devoted town. The Zahliotes resisted manfully, but their ammunition failing, they were pressed back by their foes, who, penetrating as far as the church, murdered a priest, the scholars of the Jesuit college, and several women who had taken refuge in the sacred edifice. The Christians then threw away their fire-arms, and with their swords and daggers repulsed the besiegers at every point, pursuing them to a distance of two hours from Zahleh. The fight was fierce and bloody, for the Christians lost 700 men, while the Druses, in

killed and wounded, lost 1500. But now the treachery of Khorsheed Pasha became evident; for as the Druses fled towards the Turkish camp, the soldiers opened out and fired upon the victorious Zahliotes, even using, it is said, a field piece, which they had brought with them from Beyrout. The Christians retired in good order, but seeing that the troops had joined their enemies, they gave up all hope, and under cover of the night, effected their retreat towards the Kesrawân.* On the morning of the 19th, the Druses again attacked the town, but they found the place completely evacuated. A few aged and infirm men and women alone remained, and these they slaughtered. Zahleh,—the proud and beautiful Zahleh,—was destroyed by fire, and the vast property it contained became the spoil of its treacherous invaders.

Enraged at the escape of their victims, the Druses now again turned towards Deir-el-Kamr,

* All that portion of Mount Lebanon to the north of the Nahr-el-Kelb or Dog River, is called the Kesrawân and is inhabited exclusively by Maronites. The southern portion, "mixed districts," is inhabited both by Maronites and Druses.

where they surpassed their former exploits in barbarity and cruelty.

On the 3rd of June, when the news reached Beyrout that Deir-el-Kamr had surrendered, the Consuls-General made strong representations to Khorsheed Pasha relative to the dangerous position of its inhabitants; but as only vague promises of assistance could be obtained, Mr. Moore expressed his determination to proceed alone, if necessary, to the spot, and by using his influence with the Druse chiefs, save the Christians, if possible, from the fate with which they were threatened. The energy of our Consul-General had the desired effect, and Tahir Pasha, general of division, proceeded to the relief of Deir-el-Kamr. Confidence was thus, to a certain extent, restored, and relying on the repeated assurances of this officer, that "they might depend on the protection of his troops," the people began to feel a comparative sense of security. On Wednesday, the 20th of June, however, the Druses a second time appeared before the town. The Christians, filled with alarm, rushed to the Seraï, but the military governor, Abdul-Selam Bey, told them

that, provided they kept quiet, he would answer for their safety with his head. The Druses, pretending friendship and good-will, entered unopposed; but no sooner were they assembled in sufficient numbers, than they commenced to break open the shops and warehouses, and shoot down every one that offered the least resistance. The soldiers now joined in the general pillage, and the unfortunate Christians again fled to the Seraï. Again did Abdul-Selam Bey assure them of his protection, and again, as at Hasbeiya, were the Christians treacherously betrayed. All those who desired a place of safety, were ordered to deliver up their arms and come at once to the Seraï. The order was obeyed, and before midnight hundreds had crowded into the great court of the governor's house, bringing with them their jewels, gold, and such other valuables as they could readily carry.

On Thursday morning, the 21st of June, the sun rose over Mount Lebanon with all its wonted splendour, but it brought no hope to the imprisoned citizens of Deir-el-Kamr. The bright flames shot up fiercely from their burning homes,

and the black smoke shut out the light of day, as if endeavouring to cover with an impenetrable veil the deeds of darkness and of blood which were being enacted. All feelings of humanity had fled, and the savage instincts of the tiger alone filled the hearts of those who now rushed upon their defenceless prey. Fiends they looked, as through fire and smoke, the Druse and Moslem fell upon the unarmed Christian; monsters worse than fiends, as, wading ankle-deep in blood, they still continued their fearful work of slaughter. At about two o'clock the fire had partially burned itself out; the smoke cleared away, and the sun looked down upon 2000 human bodies, made after the image of their Creator, now hacked, mutilated, and destroyed. There lay headless trunks; and here, gory heads, wearing upon their features the expression of unutterable agony; children of three or four years old, whose innocence might have been their protection; and old men, whose grey hairs might have been respected. Women, wounded and dying upon the bodies of their lifeless infants; young girls, weeping for the fathers and brothers

they had lost, and, in despairing accents, calling down Heaven's vengeance on their destroyers.

Ali Bey Hamâdee, the same Sheikh who figured so prominently at Hasbeiya, was now seen in close conference with Abdul-Selam Bey. The latter pronounced the word "Hepsi" (all); the gates of the Seraï were thrown open; the Druses rushed in upon its defenceless inmates; and then commenced a massacre which, for vindictiveness and cold-blooded atrocity, has never, perhaps, been equalled. In many instances, the Christians were first stripped perfectly naked, and then, stretched on the ground in the form of a cross, were hacked to pieces with swords and hatchets. Almost all had the right hand cut off, or the wrist deeply gashed, the instinctive feeling of self-preservation making them raise their arms to ward off the blows of their assailants. Male children were torn in two, and mothers, crouching over their offspring, saw the yataghans pierce their infants' bodies, after having first passed through their own. The despairing cries of the men, the wild shrieks of the women, the blasphemous imprecations and hellish laughter of the

Druses,—the shouts, the fire, and the smoke, all formed a scene at which humanity shudders, and from the contemplation of which the heart shrinks back sickened and appalled.

On the 22nd of June, alarm and consternation was spread through the town of Beyrout itself, for several armed Druses paraded the streets, and were everywhere received in triumph by the Moslems. On the following morning, two Moslem butchers quarrelled about a sheep outside the town. One of the men was killed by the other. The Mussulmans seized their arms, and rushing to the Seraï, demanded the blood of a Christian, whom they said was the assassin. The whole Christian population fled in terror to the Consulates, to the English houses, and to the ships in the harbour, while an armed mob held the town for a considerable time in its possession. An unfortunate Christian from Djezzin was seized, and upon the evidence of a boy only eight years old, was sentenced and beheaded within two hours. The wretched man declared his innocence to the last moment, but his protestations availed him not, and his headless body

was exposed during the whole of Sunday to the insults of a fanatical rabble. Fortunately, a Turkish line-of-battle ship, with 2250 troops on board, under the command of Ismail Pasha (General Kmety), had, in the meantime, arrived; and this, added to the presence of six English, French, and Russian frigates in the harbour, saved Beyrout, perhaps, from pillage and massacre, and caused order to be comparatively restored.

During all this time, the women and children who had made their escape from Deir-el-Kamr, and had fled to the sea-side, were being saved by our ships from the violation and death which otherwise would have befallen them. The "Gannet" and "Mohawk," brought up from the Damour river, on the 22nd and 23rd of June alone, no less than 2300 Christian women and children, numbers of whom had been wounded while flying from their persecutors, after the murder of their husbands and male relatives. The wretchedness and sufferings of these unfortunate people, no pen could perfectly describe, and they now appeal to Christian Europe to save

them from the horrors of famine, and rescue them from the otherwise certain misery which must result. "Every one of us is in distress," write the poor people of Djezzin. "Every morning the enemy comes against us and hunts us like goats; and now we are suffering more than at first. The Druses are reaping the crop of grain in its straw, and taking it away to the district of Chouf; nothing is left to us, neither grain, nor property, nor men. The distress which has come upon the people of Djezzin never can have been equalled; every day a battle takes place; they have killed ten women of the district, and even the sepulchres of the dead they have opened. Of this state of things we cannot write a description, for even the tongue would be unable to describe it."

LETTER IV.

THE TREATY OF PEACE.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *August* 8, 1860.

THE *Journal de Constantinople* states, that, at the intervention of the Pasha of Beyrout, a treaty of peace has been discussed between the Druses and the Maronites, but that the propositions which have been made by the former have not satisfied the latter, inasmuch as the Druses desire to throw a veil over everything which has been done on both sides. The truth, however, is that Khorsheed Pasha, seeing assistance at hand, now seeks to force upon the unfortunate Maronites a temporary peace, which would enable him not alone to cast a veil over the remorseless cruelties of the Druses, but over his own villany and treachery. Khorsheed Pasha, who stood passively by with his troops while the Christians were being

murdered almost before his eyes; who refused to send aid at the urgent solicitation of the English and French consuls; who helped to disarm the Maronites, promising them succour and protection, and then delivered them up defenceless to be slaughtered by their enemies; this man, whose life in any other country would be the forfeit of his crime, now seeks to force upon the Christians, at the point of the sword reeking with the blood of their fathers, their wives, and their children, a peace which would not be lasting, and which could only serve the temporary purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of Europe.*

In reference to this same treaty of peace, this same *Journal de Constantinople* has the effrontery to say:—"It is to be desired that the Christians will now return to their villages, where, we hope,

* "He (Khorsheed Pasha) proposed, as the only means of immediate conciliation, to publish a 'Boyourouldy' of peace, on the express condition (demanded by the Druses as a *sine quâ non* for the cessation of hostilities), that the two parties should agree to forget the past, and should at once renounce every claim having to do with the losses experienced on both sides. The Pasha on this occasion made use of the Arabic expression, 'Mâda ma mâda' ('That which is done is done').—*Despatch from Consul-General Moore to Sir Henry Bulwer.*

they will find tranquillity and repose." What mockery and absurdity is this? One hundred and fifty towns, villages, and hamlets have been destroyed by fire; 75,000 Christians are houseless wanderers over the mountains; 10,000 women and children have been made widows and orphans by the cold-blooded butchery of their husbands and fathers at Rasheiya, Hasbeiya and Deir-el-Kamr; yet these 75,000 Christians are calmly told by the Government journal to return quietly to their homes, where "they will find tranquillity and repose!" Yes, truly, the tranquillity and repose of the grave. Let them, defenceless and unarmed, return to their villages, and seek tranquillity in contemplating the ruined walls of what were once their homes, and let them find repose in looking upon the mangled remnants of what they can no longer recognise as a father or a child. And as they thus sit together, without shelter and without food, surrounded by everything that makes man appear so little and God so great, they will look up to that ever glorious sky above them, and ask each other if there is not in Heaven a just and righteous Judge, who

will punish the murderers of His children. They will ask each other—simple mountaineers as they are—if the Franks have all turned Turks, and are leagued against them? or they will wonder if the tradition of those Mussulmans be true which relates the disappearance of Mohammed-ben-Hassan in the grotto of Stella (160 of the Hegira), where he is to remain invisible until he shall again come forth under the name of Mehdi, the leader; they will question each other if, indeed, this Mehdi can have now come forth, and whether it is destined that he shall plant his banner once more over the prostrate standard of the Cross?

Can it be wondered at if these poor people indulge in such reveries when they see all Christian Europe standing passive and inactive? Can it be wondered if they begin to fancy that the only followers of Christ are those who are sheltered by the peaks of Lebanon? Let me here, however, tell England and France, that if they now permit the barbarities of the past two months to go unpunished—if they allow a peace to be patched up, casting a veil over rapine, violation, and murder,—let me warn them that the

massacre of Djeddah, the wholesale slaughter in the Lebanon, and the butcheries of Damascus may ere long be repeated in the streets of Galata and Pera. The Mussulmans will say—"We massacred the Christians in Djeddah and nothing came of it; 10,000 Christians were slaughtered in Lebanon and 8000 in Damascus, and yet the boasted chivalry of Christendom did nothing. Inshallah! God is great. Let us now cut the throats of those Christian dogs in Constantinople."

The causes which have led to the late outbreak between the Druses and the Maronites appear to be but little understood in England. I have, however, travelled over the Lebanon; I have visited the homes of the Maronites and conversed with the Druses; I am acquainted with the sentiments of the native Christians of Beyrout; and I believe the causes might be traced nearer to ourselves than may be imagined. The remote cause has been, without doubt, the fatal policy which made our Government, in 1840, remove the reigning prince of the house of Schahâb. The Emir Beshir was beloved by the people:

and, instead of dividing the two races and making them destroy each other, he was able, by the great authority which he possessed, to unite them almost into one body; whilst, on the contrary, the rule which succeeded him, of the Kaïmacams, who are mere delegates of the Pasha of Sidon, has had for its object the old policy of "Divide and govern."

The policy we have pursued in Syria since 1840 has been altogether destructive of that influence which we formerly possessed; for, in order to counterbalance the otherwise preponderating influence of France, we have been in every instance the supporters and champions of the Druses. It is a fact which cannot be denied—nay, indeed, it is admitted—that the English residents in Beyrout have always been the stanch supporters of the Druses, and these people have invariably looked to our consuls for encouragement and protection.* I do not speak from hear-

* "At the commencement of the struggle, the sympathies of many persons were with the Druses." . . . . "Amongst the Druses, education and religious toleration were making rapid strides. They welcomed, nay, craved for, English schools.

say—I speak from personal observation—and I must in candour avow that the statement made by M. Pierre David, formerly French Consul-General in Turkey, is not without some foundation. "What," he says, "can have now armed the Druses against the Maronites—these two races so long united for their common safety? They talk of American missionaries, who were come to excite their minds by a religious mysticism, mingled with ideas of liberty; but who can suppose that these Christians of the sixth century, without education, without preparation of any kind in political ideas, constantly under the eyes of their bishops and their priests, would permit themselves to be seduced by such transatlantic

The light of the Gospel was gradually spreading. Protestantism was effecting a footing, both among them and the Christians in their districts."—*Beyrout Correspondent of the Levant Herald.*

"S'aîd Bey—the great Druse chief of Mukhtârah—answered me: 'I and my people are under the command of the Queen of England; our only desire is to obey England in all things.'"—*Papers relating to the Disturbances in Syria. Report by Mr. Graham, July 3rd.*

"The Druses are generally regarded as allies of England." . . . . . "The Druses look upon the English as their friends and protectors."—*Rev. J. L. Porter, author of Five Years in Damascus, Syria and Palestine.*

reveries? Who can think that these cultivators of vines and mulberries, content with their lot, would become philosophical thinkers and instruments of revolution? As for the Druses, that species of amphibious religionists, who profess in turns, just as it may suit them, either Islamism or Christianity, or I know not what obscure idolatry having a resemblance to that of the golden calf; and who would profess a fourth belief if their avarice were interested, so that they could reject it when it no longer served their purpose, are they become revolutionary propagandists upon the invitation of these American preachers? That is scarcely credible. Where, then, was the cause of this civil war, so contrary to the common safety of the two populations? It is suspected that England has favoured the American missionaries for a purpose purely political." No doubt this is exaggerated; but, nevertheless it contains some truth, and although that truth may be unpalatable, I do not withhold it, as I trust our Government may take warning from past errors, and instead of supporting one race against another, join firmly and

sincerely with France for the common good of all.

Achmed Pasha, ex-commander-in-chief of the army of Arabistan, arrived here under arrest on Monday last. He was immediately conveyed to the Seraskeriat, where, in pursuance of an imperial *iradé*, he has been this day publicly degraded from his rank. The imperial order was read aloud in presence of a large body of troops and civil functionaries, and then, with most humiliating precision, the ferahy (brass button) was torn from the fez of this degraded general; the golden epaulettes were rudely taken from his shoulders, the sword, which he had not the courage to draw in defence of the innocent, was broken before his face, and when the spectators had been informed that "Achmed Pasha was deprived of all rank and honours," he, the late governor-general of Damascus, was conducted back to prison.

The following is the text of the "Treaty of Peace between the Christians and Druses," which has been proposed by Khorsheed Pasha.

"We, the undersigned, Kaïmacam of the Christians, Deputies of the people, Onakils,* Emirs, and Mokattadjis,† members of the Medjlis and Notables, have appeared, in obedience to the orders of his Excellency our Lord the Mushir of the Eyalet, before his Excellency's Kiahia and Lieutenant, his Excellency Wasfi Effendi, and after deliberation and discussion between us and the Kaïmacam of the Druses and Deputies of the said nation, Onakils, Emirs, Mokattadjis, members of the Medjlis and Notables, as to the duty of securing the means of repressing the dissensions that have arisen, of guarding the country,

* Onakil signifies a law-authority, equivalent to a paid magistrate.

† Mokattadjis is about the same as the mayor of a district.

of restoring the tranquillity and well-being of the people, in pursuance of the Mushirial orders, and of our love of country, have agreed as follows:—

"That since the commencement of those disturbances, the Government, the chiefs of the country, the reasonable men, and those who love the country and tranquillity, have never ceased to prevent their taking place. But whereas from the machinations of those who love disorder, and principally persons who have no pity on new-born babes, young boys and girls, and from the obstinacy of unreasonable men, they were not able to prevent war from breaking out. Admitting also that in such a state of things there is no other means of putting an end to the effusion of blood, and producing a general peace than concluding a treaty between the belligerent parties conformably to the condition of that which was made in the year 1261 of the Hegira (1845), which is 'Oblivion of what has taken place.'*

"It has consequently been agreed with the

* This preamble is intended apparently to exclude all idea of premeditation on the part of the local authorities, and to throw the blame on some unfortunate Christians selected in advance.

help of God to draw up this treaty of general peace, on the above-mentioned condition, and that for all that has happened from the commencement of the general war to the present time, none of the parties has the right of making any claim either for the present or the future; that after the signature of this treaty whoever shall seek to break the peace shall be immediately punished by the authorities, and whoever shall endeavour to protect him shall be also punished. All the chiefs must in such a case unite to prevent the recurrence of such a fact.

"The orders of the authorities will be issued in conformity with the regulations of the Mountain. The Kaïmacam and the Mokattadjis must also conform their actions to the administrative regulations of the Libanus, without any change, and must promptly execute all the orders of the authorities, and make the latter acquainted with the state of affairs whenever it may be necessary so to do. They must use all their efforts to promote union, friendship, and concord between the two nations; to procure the tranquillity and welfare of all the inhabitants, and particularly to

endeavour to bring every individual back to his house to live there in peace, and resume the possession of his property without any one throwing any obstacle or molesting him in so doing. They shall in case of need lend their co-operation to the people in conformity to the regulations of the Government, and with the aid of his Excellency the Mushir.

"Prompt means shall be adopted, as soon as possible, to put an end to any cause of disunion, and restore relations of friendship and general tranquillity, conformably to the will and to the orders of the Sultan, whom God preserve, and to the intentions of his Excellency the Mushir. But, as it is admitted that the principal causes of disorder are to be found in the carelessness with which the orders and regulations of the administration are executed, the undersigned beseech his Excellency to take effectual measures for the administration of justice with impartiality to every one.*

* This paragraph seems to have for its object to ask the government indirectly to intervene in the administration of the Lebanon, contrary to the treaty of Chekib-Effendi, agreed to

"All the Mokattadjis and officials must perform the duties confided to them with zeal and attention, in conformity with the regulations of the Mountain, without allowing any one to be treated with the slightest injustice—duties which it is hoped they will fulfil with conscientious eagerness and impartiality.

"Conformably with the above, peace is concluded between us on the condition above named, and it has been considered proper to draw up four copies of it, signed by each nation, two of which will be exchanged between the parties, and two will be presented to his Excellency the Mushir, to be kept in the archives of the Government, and serve as the rule of conduct for the present and for the future."*

between the Powers and the Porte. It is a first step towards Turkish interference in the Mountain.

* The Christian Kaïmacam and some of his creatures signed, but the clergy refused, and letters state that the greater portion of the principal Christians and Onakils refuse to accept the document.

LETTER V.

MOSLEM FANATICISM.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *August* 15, 1860.

THE dreadful calamities which have just befallen Damascus, have been caused by no sudden outburst of Mohammedan fanaticism; on the contrary, the feelings of hatred, now so strongly evinced, have been long pent up, and an opportunity alone was wanted to wreak a wished-for vengeance upon the unoffending Christian. Since the murders committed at Djeddah, those feelings have continued to increase, until, at length, the successful onslaught of the Druses on the Maronites became, as it were, the signal for that rising, which it was hoped would, finally and for ever, trample out Christianity from the land.

It is not a very long time since a fanatic mob of Mussulmans attacked the Greek Orthodox

Church at Gaza, seriously injuring the building and the adjoining school-room, solely because "they would not endure to see the church white-washed or painted." About the same time (October, 1858), Mr. Consul Finn reported that "the native Christians in Jerusalem were under apprehensions of some outbreak of Mohammedan fanaticism against them;" and this idea was founded "not only on the curses hurled at them and their religion while passing through the streets on their daily avocations, or while sitting in their shops, but on innumerable small occurrences seeming to tend towards the same end." The effect produced on the population of Damascus by the murder of the consular officers of Great Britain and France at Djeddah, was, according to Mr. Consul Brant's report (August 2, 1858), "a certain degree of satisfaction that the Infidels had been so treated for polluting, by their presence, so holy a city. Some, indeed, went so far as to speak of expelling European consuls and Christians from Damascus, and it was remarked that a consul had been murdered at Marash, for which no punishment was in-

flicted." At Aleppo, the ebullition of Moslem fanaticism was so great that "fire-arms and ammunition were hurriedly purchased wherever they could be obtained, and some of the Mussulmans secretly announced to respectable European families, with whom they were on friendly terms, that a general massacre was about to commence, and advised them to take refuge in places of safety, if any such could be found."* In the district of Nablous, two villages, Zebabdeh and Likfair (all the inhabitants of which are Christians), "were completely sacked, and men and women stripped even to their shirts and then turned adrift. The house of the Christian priest was taken during his absence; his stores of grain and oil for household use during the winter were mixed into one heap by the Moslems of the city, and thrown into the street;" and "the Greek Patriarch, when returning through the streets of Jerusalem from the Cadi's Court of Judgment, preceded by carasses and dragoman, had to pass through a gauntlet of curses hurled

* Consul Skene to Mr. Alison, July 31, 1858.

at his religion, his prayers, and his fathers."* In view of such a state of things, Mr. Consul-General Moore thought it necessary to recommend "that an English man-of-war should be sent to Beyrout, for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects resident in Syria," for although that town, "owing to the great majority of the population being Christian, was comparatively secure, yet the large interior cities, such as Damascus and Aleppo, as well as the sea-coast towns, were liable at any moment to a Mohammedan rising." †

It would, however, be a very great mistake to suppose that this intolerance arises altogether from the fanaticism of the Turks, as, on the contrary, the hatred entertained by the Mussulman population of Syria towards their Turkish masters is scarcely less violent than the detestation felt towards the Christians. The Osmanli Turks, who form but a very small portion of the population, are generally looked upon as degenerate Mohammedans, and even the authority of the

* Consul Finn to the Earl of Malmesbury, November 8, 1858.

† Consul-General Moore to Vice-Admiral Fanshawe.

Sultan himself is barely respected. The Arabs and other Moslems consider that the Sultan has forfeited their allegiance, and that, in fact, the country no longer belongs to him, on account of the unlawful concessions which he has made to Christians.* Even officials in authority do not hesitate to cast reproaches upon the Padishah, asserting that "The Sultan eats melons," † and that "His Majesty's officers and subjects are only bound to obey him so long as his orders are in conformity with the law of the Prophet."

The Mussulmans of Jerusalem, Nazareth, Aleppo, and Damascus have been dissatisfied with the reforms which His Majesty has endeavoured to effect, and indignant at the concessions which he has, of late years, made to the Christians; and while the Rayahs at Constan-

* "A common camel-driver, likewise of the Bedawîn, bringing salt from beyond the Dead Sea, protested last week, to Mr. Meshullam, that the country belongs not to the Turkish Sultan, who has made unlawful concessions to Christians; therefore, the swords of true believers will be speedily defiled wi Christian blood."—*Consul Finn to the Earl of Malmesbury.*

† A vulgar expression, meaning that the Sultan talks impotently, or talks nonsense.

tinople, who, not long ago, were obliged to content themselves with houses of a particular colour, and of a very miserable appearance, are now the possessors of the finest yalis on the Bosphorus, and the most splendid palaces in Pera, the position of their brethren in the cities of Syria has been exceedingly insecure. In Constantinople, Smyrna, and some other chief towns, civilisation and progress are everywhere visible. European manners have been assumed; old-established prejudices have given way; and even the national character itself has yielded to the salutary influence exercised by the Western Powers; but in the Asiatic provinces no such progress has been made, and, with the exception of Beyrout, religious animosity still disturbs the peace of the towns, while the plains of Syria are to-day, as they were a thousand years ago, the battle-field on which race contests with race, and tribe contends with tribe. In the Lebanon the once powerful family of the Harfûsh has become nearly annihilated by internecine feuds. Meer Mohammed Harfûsh, of Zahleh, attacks, with his [illegible]owers, Meer Suleiman of Baalbek. In

his turn, Meer Suleiman becomes the aggressor, until, at length, both fall and give way to other chiefs, who, learning nothing from the past, still continue to pursue the same bloody path which leads to ruin and to death. Ismaïl Kheir Bey and Osman Hamra, Ansayrîan chiefs, levy their contributions to such an extent on the villages near and round Hamah and Homs, that all the Christian inhabitants desert their homes and emigrate to villages less exposed. The Dendeshlees, under their chief, Abood Agha, refuse to acknowledge the Ansayrîans as their superiors; and, after various contests, Ismaïl Kheir Bey is defeated, and seeks refuge in the house of his uncle Ali Shallah.* Ismaïl is there informed of his brother's death, and, while under the influence

* The Ansayrîans (about 100,000 souls), recognise the Prophet Ali, but are in connection with the various other Mussulman sects. Their religious doctrine appears to be a derivation more or less direct from the ancient worship of Adonis. They consider the women as the beginning and end of all creation, and annually elect a young girl, as goddess or priestess, to whom they address prayers and invocations. The Ansayrîans have also annual assemblies, where the sectaries of every age and of both sexes assemble together in the midst of darkness; but what religious rites are there performed, no one has been able to discover.

of this mournful intelligence, is shot in the side by Ali Shallah, and finally despatched by one of his uncle's followers. Ismaïl's sons (mere children) are sought for, as Ali Shallah remembers that if they grow up to manhood, there will be a blood feud between them. They are accordingly found, and put to death. The heads of Ismaïl and his brother are sent to Damascus, while their wives are shared between Ali Shallah and his gang. Ali Shallah becomes chief of the Ansayrîans, and will, no doubt, some day meet a similar fate to that inflicted by him upon his nephew. In the plains of Esdraelon, the Arab tribes of the Beni Sukr, espousing the interests of the Tokan and Jenar in the Jebel Nablons, oppose the Adwân and other tribes from beyond Jordan. The former lose their celebrated chief Rubbahh, and send wailing women on camels to proclaim their calamity among the Arabs of the far East, and write to them to form an alliance for taking revenge, while the victorious Adwân and Abdul-Hady pursue their advantages by plundering flocks and herds beyond the district of Nablons; even to villages within sight of Jaffa.

During the short space of three months it was calculated that 3000 Bedawîn had perished in conflicts with each other within the Pashalic of Jerusalem alone.

Over such a people, composed of races so dissimilar in character and in manners, it must necessarily be very difficult to rule; and it is not at all to be wondered at, if, amongst them, the authority of the Sultan is little heeded. But although disunited and living in constant hostility to each other, there is one point upon which they are all agreed, and that is, undying hatred to the Christian. These men, uncivilised and unlearned, shut out from all knowledge of the world beyond their own limited sphere, take no note of the advance of time; and interpret the Koran now, in the same spirit as their ancestors did 1200 years ago. "The worst of all beasts is the Infidel."—"Kill all those who do not believe in God and in the day of judgment," says the Koran; but these people believe that the Infidels are not alone those who do not believe in God, but also those who do not believe in Mohammed.*

* That the Osmanlis do not thus interpret the Koran, is

The Mussulmans of Damascus are not less fanatical than their brethren of the surrounding plains; and it may, therefore, be easily imagined with what feelings of gratification they received the news of the massacres at Rasheiya, Hasbeiya, and Deir-el-Kamr. The Christians, numbering

evident from the public acts of many Sultans, as well as from the edicts of Mahmoud II. and his successor Abdul-Medjid. If any proof of this were wanting, it would be found not alone in the Hatti-Humayoun of 1856, but in the recent despatch addressed by the Turkish Government to the governors of Kurdistan, of Kharpont, Mossul, Baghdad, Marash, Adana, Sivas, Angora, Trebizond, Erzeroum, and to the commander-in-chief of the army of Anatolia. "The Porte," says the Turkish Government, "has learned with much regret that, at Damascus, Mussulmans have attacked Christians, faithful subjects of the Sultan, and have dared to commit cruelties such as murder and pillage. It is unnecessary to repeat that the protection of the property, of the life, and of the honour of the Christian subjects of the Porte, confided by God to our sovereign, is one of the most glorious and fundamental precepts of the holy law, and it is evident that he who acts contrary to that precept, can find neither safety in this world nor salvation in the next.

"Although the authors of these odious acts, so contrary to the law of Mohammed and to the benevolent and paternal feeling of His Imperial Majesty, shall soon suffer severe chastisements according to the law and to the code, yet, if senseless men, not perfectly understanding their religion, should again commit similar acts against Christians, the difficulties and dangers which would thus result to the government would be enormous, &c., &c."

only 30,000 in a population of 180,000, naturally became alarmed, for the intolerance and bigotry of former days commenced to reappear. Old observances, annulled by law and long since passed away, were again insisted upon. Christians were, once more, obliged to dismount from their horses upon entering the gates, and compelled to walk on foot when within the city. The colour of their dress became offensive, and, in order to escape from insult, they were obliged, not only to change their clothes, but to conform in many ways to the old vexatious regulations which had been abolished by the Tanzimat. Complaints were made, from time to time, to Achmed Pasha the Governor-General, but he took no steps whatever to quell the daily increasing agitation. Thus matters went on until the 8th of July, when, as the Christians were leaving their churches, crowds of Moslem boys amused themselves by making crosses, with chalk, upon the ground, in such a manner that the Christians were necessarily obliged to walk over them. Not satisfied even with this wanton insult, the boys continued to spit upon the sacred emblem, and

revile the Christians, as they passed to their houses, with all those opprobrious epithets which a low rabble, in all countries, so thoroughly understand. No notice whatever was taken of this conduct by the Christians; nevertheless, on the next day, the chief of police placed a number of these boys in chains, and sent them to sweep the streets in the Christian quarter. Nothing could be more conducive to create disorder than this act on the part of the authorities; and, accordingly, as if the whole affair had been regularly planned beforehand, a riot immediately ensued. At two o'clock, P. M., on Monday the 9th of July, the tumult had assumed a serious and threatening aspect. About 500 Mussulmans, armed with sticks, swords, daggers, axes, and with any other weapon upon which they could seize, rushed into the Christian quarter, crying aloud,—"Death to the Christians! Kill them! Butcher them! Burn the houses! Plunder! Leave nothing! Fear not the soldiers! Rid the holy city for ever of the Infidel!" The Russian, French, and Greek Consulates, the Franciscan convent of Terra Santa, the convent of the Sisters

of Charity; the churches,—in fact, the whole Christian quarter was soon pillaged and destroyed. From hour to hour the excitement continued to increase. Druses, Kurds, and Arabs swelled the surging tide of miscreants, as they rushed onwards, pillaging, burning, and slaying. From two o'clock, P. M., until midnight, one continuous stream of human beings continued to advance, while another returned, laden with plunder of all sorts, jewels, gold, tables, chairs, horses, silks and cottons, everything and anything that they could lay hands upon either in the shops, the houses, or the churches. About sunset, 300 Turkish troops arrived from the castle; but as they were under the command of Osman Bey, who had rendered himself so infamously notorious at Hasbeiya, their presence, instead of affording protection to the Christians, only added to the number of their assassins. During seven days the work of pillage and massacre continued, and Achmed Pasha was in vain implored to stay the slaughter. Shutting himself up in the castle, he, a field-marshal in the Sultan's service, Governor-General of Damascus, and commander-

in-chief of the army of Arabistan, permitted his fellow-subjects to be murdered and their property plundered, without lifting a hand to save them, although it is well known that had he placed himself at the head of a hundred armed men determined to do their duty, he could, at any moment, have put a stop to the horrible acts which were being perpetrated. On the first day, the Rev. Mr. Grahame, an Irish Presbyterian missionary, was mistaken for one of the European consuls, and killed close to the British Consulate. Eight Franciscan friars of the Terra Santa, and fifty Greek and Maronite priests were massacred. All the Christian men, who were unable to reach the castle or obtain shelter in the house of Abd-el-Kader, were most barbarously murdered; while hundreds of respectable women and girls, who, up to that moment had lived in the enjoyment of all the ease and luxury which wealth could give, were either dragged into the harems of the Moslems, or carried off by the Bedawîn into the desert.

The sisters of charity, surrounded by 300 unfortunate refugees, contemplated their fate with

resignation. The flames rapidly approached. The fire had already reached the convent. The blasphemous shouts of the infuriated mob were heard nearer and nearer. A dreadful death appeared to await them, and, on their knees in prayer, they committed their souls to God; when, unexpectedly, Abd-el-Kader and his Algerines appeared before the gates. The fanatic crowd of murderers rushed on, but were repelled by the calm and stern attitude of this hero, who rebuked and, for a moment, overawed the cowardly assassins who would have butchered defenceless women. Struck by his commanding presence, and not unmindful of his former glorious deeds, the furious multitude hesitated and wavered. The devoted Algerines, seizing the propitious moment, surrounded the sisters and their companions, and conducting them in safety to the Emîr's house, saved them from the horrible fate with which they had been threatened.

The number killed during this frightful massacre is variously estimated. The account given by the local authorities states the number to have been 4500; while, by others, it is sup-

posed that at least 8000 perished. The latter appears to be a close approximation to the truth. Fifteen thousand Christians, it is said, were saved by Abd-el-Kader, and 7000 took refuge in the castle, making in all 22,000; which out of a population of 30,000 would leave a total loss of 8000.

LETTER VI.

DAMASCUS.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *August* 22, 1860.

DAMASCUS, the capital of Syria, is situate in a fertile plain at the east base of the Anti-Lebanon, about 180 miles from Aleppo, and 60 miles from Beyrout. It is one of the most ancient cities in the world, and has been, from the earliest times, remarkable alike for the unrivalled beauty of its situation, as well as for the superiority of its manufactures and the magnitude of its trade.

Standing on the high-road between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, it became, in the flourishing days of Phœnician commerce, an emporium for the trade between Europe and India; and, although subsequently overshadowed by the magnificence and grandeur of Palmyra, it rose to great wealth and power. In the time of

Solomon, it was the capital of an independent kingdom, which afterwards, under the name of the Kingdom of Syria, was engaged in wars with the Jews. It was subsequently annexed to the empire of Assyria, as well as to that of Persia; it then fell into the hands of the Macedonians, the Romans, the Arabs, and lastly of the Ottoman Turks, when in A.D. 1517, it was taken by Sultan Selim I. Still, though so often taken and devastated, it has always risen again, and while the wonderful ruins of Baalbec and Palmyra mournfully attest the greatness of their former splendour, Damascus has remained the most opulent city in Syria. The population of Damascus, before the recent outbreak, amounted to 180,000, viz., 130,000 Mussulmans, 30,000 Christians, and 20,000 Jews. The city contained 60 places of worship, 31 khans, and large entrepôts for merchandise, besides the great Bazaar destined to receive the caravans, and capable of containing from 1200 to 1500 camels; 150 coffee-houses, some of which were considered the finest in the East; 750 dealers in damask stuffs, 185 dyers, 70 printers on stuffs, 200 dealers in handkerchiefs and fancy articles,

98 fringe makers, 72 saddlers'-shops, 78 tobacco manufacturers, and 48 pipe makers.

The pashalic of Damascus extends, north to south, from Hamah on the Orontes down to the deserts of Arabia Petræa south-east of the Dead Sea, a length of about four degrees of latitude. It comprehends the country of Haurân and the other districts on the east side of the Jordan, the Lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea, besides the greater part of Judæa west of the Jordan, including Jerusalem and Nablons. Corn, hemp, flax, madder, tobacco, cotton, silk, and cochineal, are the chief products. The surface, except in the west, is level; and the land, susceptible of cultivation, is extremely fertile, capable of supporting a population of six millions of souls. The population at present, exclusive of the Bedawîn, is not more than 500,000.

From its favourable position, Damascus is the seat of an extensive trade. The productions of India, consisting chiefly of spices, pepper, cinnamon, nutmegs, Java and other sugars; musk, cardamoms, aloes, camphor; cotton manufactures, coarse and fine muslins, gold stuffs; porcelain,

indigo, &c., are in great demand and bring high prices. They are brought from India by the Persian Gulf, Bussora and Baghdad. The manufactures of Great Britain are much sought after and held in very high esteem, particularly grey T cloths, printed cottons and chintzes, grey calicoes, long-cloths, calico shirting and sheeting, jaconets, cotton handkerchiefs and silk and cotton shawls of gay colours, made in imitation of those of Cashmere. About 150,000 pieces of plain calicoes are annually used for local consumption; also 20,000 pieces of various kinds of printed calicoes, about 5000 dozens cotton handkerchiefs, and 500,000 lbs. of cotton yarn used in mixing with silk in the manufactures of the place. Besides these, there are imported a considerable quantity of sheet copper, sheet and bar iron, tin in bars and plates, some refined sugar, West India coffee and spices.

The manufacture of sabre-blades, for which Damascus was formerly so celebrated, has long since declined; but the manufactures of silk stuffs, embroidered with gold, as well as of plain cotton, and cotton and silk mixed, are carried on to a

considerable extent; while in the bazaars are to be seen the manufactures of almost every country in the world. Superb caparisons for horses from European Turkey; rich bridles, martingales and silver embossed breastpieces from Persia; richly ornamented fire-arms from France and Germany; silk from India and China; furs from Russia, Georgia, Circassia and Armenia; velvets from Italy, and cottons from Great Britain, as well as various other articles of an inferior kind from England, Germany, and France.

The great Hadji caravan, consisting of from 50,000 to 60,000 pilgrims, goes every year from Damascus to Mecca, and on its departure and arrival occasions considerable activity to trade. On its passage southward, it gives origin to a retail trade in English cotton manufactures, small articles of Persian manufacture, and, sometimes, jewellery. On its return, the Hadjis bring back Indian and Arabian produce, coffee, spices, aloe-wood, and various articles of Indian manufacture.

LETTER VII.

THE MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS IN DAMASCUS.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *August* 29, 1860.

"TELL the Ambassador," said Fuad Pasha to the chief dragoman of the French Embassy, "that at the peril of my life, I shall wipe out the stain which rests upon the honour of the army, and that the troops will do their duty." Admirable pledge, giving promise of bold and firm resolves. Noble words, which sound well to the ear, and look well on paper.

The steam frigate "Taïf," with his Excellency and suite, left the Golden Horn for Beyrout on the 12th of July; yet up to this day, nothing has been done which can in the slightest degree satisfy public opinion in Europe, or allay the legitimate indignation which has been felt at the cold-blooded atrocities that have been committed. True, some

hundreds of the rabble have been arrested at Damascus; Achmed Pasha, late governor, has been brought here under arrest, and after being publicly degraded from his rank, has been sent back to Beyrout; but he still breathes and lives whilst eight thousand of his victims lie buried in their bloody graves. Osman Bey, the colonel of the Turkish troops at Hasbeiya, still carries his head upon his shoulders, whilst the slaughter of those eight hundred unarmed and defenceless men whom he so treacherously delivered up to the Druses remains unavenged. Khorsheed Pasha, who is said to be the greatest criminal of all, is in retirement at Cyprus, where no doubt he will quietly remain until his crimes are forgotten, and he can then seek change of air in his villa on the Bosphorus. But surely degradation, imprisonment, or exile, cannot be an adequate punishment for the enormities that have been committed, nor can the incarceration or even execution of a few of the Damascus mob avenge the blood which these men have been instrumental in so freely shedding. No doubt whatever appears to exist as to the complicity of Khorsheed Pasha in all

those horrors of which the Lebanon has been the scene, and outraged humanity calls for vengeance on the man by whose means and at whose instigation such barbarities have been perpetrated. A correspondent at Beyrout, speaking of Khorsheed Pasha, says :—" Was the Pasha of Beyrout ignorant that Druses and Christians were for the last four months on the eve of taking up arms, the one against the other? If so, he was the only man in Beyrout who was not aware of the fact. What preventive steps did he take? None whatever. But I will go further. How was it that the fact of the Pasha moving into camp close to the villages of Hadeth and Bhabda, about half-an-hour's ride from Beyrout, with 600 regular troops under his orders,—how was it, I ask, that this was the spark which set fire to the train? How was it—there are European witnesses of this who were in the Druse mountains at the time, and can speak to the fact, and who will be only too glad to come forward and give their evidence—how was it that the moment the first gun of the salute was fired on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 29th of May, to celebrate the

Pasha's arrival in the camp (a salute under such circumstances is unheard of even amongst the Turks, but let that pass), every Druse in Lebanon left his labour, seized his gun, and rushed to the place of rendezvous, saying "There is the signal for us to fall upon the dogs of Christians?" Were all these circumstances but owing to chance? if so, the Pasha of Beyrout is a most unfortunate man. But I will go further still, and relate what I witnessed with my own eyes, standing not two hundred yards from the scene of conflict. How is it that on the morning of Wednesday, the 30th of May, when the Druses rushed down like blood-hounds upon the villages of Hadeth and Bhabda, that the Pasha and his troop stood without moving a man or a gun against them, and allowed the conflict to go on within three hundred yards of the camp? No, I am wrong; there was a movement made from the Pasha's camp, but it was on the part of his irregular troops who burnt and plundered even more than the Druses: and when the Christians of these villages (all the armed men of which had been ordered the evening before to disperse, and had obeyed the Pasha's

order), fled towards Beyrout, men, women, and children, in a helpless multitude—how came the Pasha to open out and fire three rounds from the field pieces upon them? All this, I repeat, I was witness of, and I speak advisedly and in cold blood, when I say that in the affair of Hadeth and Bhabda alone, Khorsheed Pasha was either a traitor to his Imperial master, or else the Sultan betrayed his Christian subjects; the latter, no one, of course, believes. And yet this was perhaps the least guilty act of the whole crusade."

The losses sustained by the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon would be, at the present moment, impossible to calculate. All the crops, silk, mulberries, cereals, &c., from the district of the Meten to the plains of Nazareth, are everywhere laid waste; 28 colleges and 326 villages are, it is said, in ruins; 560 churches have been pulled down, and 42 convents, together with 9 European religious establishments, have been burned. The products of the gardens in the fertile plains of the Bekâa, of the Anti-Lebanon, from the village of Hamah to the Haurân, as well as the crops of the Haurân itself, the richest district in

Syria, a total of 116,360 square kilometres, are all completely and irretrievably destroyed; while it is estimated that the actual loss of property at Damascus alone has been upwards of two millions sterling.

Each mail brings us some fresh details relative to the horrid sufferings endured by the Christians at Damascus. Some who tried to conceal themselves in the chimneys were actually burned alive; others, hoping to escape from the general massacre, descended into the wells, where they were surprised and suffocated by their cowardly assassins. Women pursued by the flames precipitated themselves from the windows, while men who hoped to save themselves in the same manner, were received beneath on the bayonets or daggers of the Mussulmans.

Upon the first outbreak on the 9th of July, many Christians, who were unable to join Abd-el-Kader, fled for refuge to the Greek Catholic church; but fire having soon been placed to this edifice, the unfortunate inmates, about 300 in number, were obliged to seek safety in flight. They left Damascus in the hope of finding an

asylum in the Russian convent of Saidnâya, two hours' distance; but scarcely had they reached a place called Djessar-el-Hidacheriyeh, (distant only a quarter of an hour from Damascus), when they were assailed by a band of 800 Mussulmans, and, with the exception of 1800 women and girls, the whole caravan were brutally massacred. The unfortunate women, dragged into the gardens and into the neighbouring Moslem houses, were victims of unspeakable violence; after which, some were compelled, by force, to embrace Islamism, whilst others, who still resisted their torturers, were cruelly slaughtered. The greater number were driven through the streets completely naked, scarcely able to walk, and then sold by auction, at from five to twenty-five shillings, to the Bedawîns and Arabs of the Desert.

On the same day, near the Mosque of Zekieh, another band of miscreants encountered a Christian family who were endeavouring to escape; in an instant their passage was stopped. The chief of the family, an aged, venerable man, in vain stood forth offering himself as a sacrifice, and calling upon the murderers to slay him, but spare the

women and children. Two Mussulmans rushed towards the old man; they cut off his nose, his ears, and his lips, and, having made an incision upon his forehead in the form of a cross, tore down the skin over his eyes. Then, blind with blood, mad with pain and despair, this unfortunate creature went howling and groping along the streets, knocking at the doors in vain, for no one dared give him admittance. During this time, two sisters, one of whom was suckling her infant, were rudely separated from each other. The infant, torn from the maternal bosom, was cast upon a neighouring terrace, and the young mother found herself in the arms of the murderer of her child. She struggled, however, with such despairing energy, that twice she threw her ravisher to the ground; then, feeling her strength failing, she seized a yataghan with both her hands, drew it from its sheath, and plunged it into her breast. Her bleeding body fell palpitating upon that of her sister, dead like her, but dead after dishonour. The latter had been slaughtered upon the yet living body of her brother, who had fallen, wounded in her defence.

At a short distance from the Seraï there was a bazaar kept by Christians, subjects of Holland. The Moslems penetrated into the shop, forced the doors, and commenced to pillage. The jewels and a portion of the merchandise had been, however, fortunately, or rather I should say, unfortunately, removed, and concealed during the previous day. This exasperated the robbers, who seized Mrs. Verner, and, attaching a cord to her left leg, held her suspended from the window with her head downwards. In this position they allowed her to struggle for a considerable time; the monsters in the streets loaded their pistols with powder and fired the contents at her body, while those above amused themselves by casting upon her ignited rags. This continued for an hour, until at length she was slowly burned, and expired in the most horrible torments. The husband, Mr. Verner, tied by the hands and feet upon a stove which his murderers caused to be heated, was a spectator of this horrid scene; they summoned him, as the only means of saving his wife, to tell them where he had placed his gold and jewels. He told them the house of the mer-

chant in which they were concealed, but that did not satisfy them, for they thought he had secreted his valuables near at hand. At last, finding they could discover nothing, they released him and fled—too late, however, for Mr. Verner was dead, the half of his body having been literally broiled.

On Wednesday, the 11th of July, the Christian quarter was an immense furnace; the ground was everywhere covered with dead bodies, but the murderers were not yet satisfied. On that day they penetrated into the house of a M. Anhouri, an old man who held the first rank in Damascus, and was generally esteemed, not alone on account of his fortune, but also on account of the goodness and charity for which he was remarkable. M. Anhouri was put to death, together with all the males of his numerous family, as well as six priests, his guests, and domestics. The house was sacked; the women and girls, to the number of twenty-four, were put to the most infamous tortures, then dragged through the streets, half dead with grief and shame, naked and bloody, and sending forth piercing cries of anguish and despair. Some of them were sold

to the Kurds; others, more fortunate, were met by M. Lanausse of the French consulate, who, disguised as a Bedawîn, traversed the streets with a strong body of Algerines, and saved the Christians whom he encountered. M. Lanausse bought these unfortunate women, whom he covered with the cloaks of the Algerines, and conducted them in safety to Abd-el-Kader.

LETTER VIII.

RETRIBUTION.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 1, 1860.

THERE are some persons whom nothing appears to satisfy. The more they obtain the more their desires increase, and, instead of being thankful for past concessions, they become still more exacting. An example of this idiosyncracy is afforded by the Beyrout correspondent of the Levant Herald in one of his recent letters. The unexpected and surprising energy displayed by Fuad Pasha, the public execution of 939 Mussulmans at Damascus, the trial and condemnation of Achmed Pasha, ex-Governor-General, of Lieutenants Colonel Osman Bey, Mehemet-Ali Bey, and Abdul-Selam Bey, who respectively commanded at Hasbeiya, Rasheiya, and Deir-el-Kamr, — all this appears insufficient to satisfy

the craving desires of this writer, whom nothing less will now content than the head of a Pasha from Constantinople.

The Turks have made great progress during the past twenty years, but they have not yet introduced trial by jury into their internal administration; and as Achmed Pasha was tried at Damascus, and Khorsheed Pasha is now arraigned at Beyrout, before a commission, instead of before a jury with a public audience, the conclusion is therefore at once arrived at, that some state secret is being hushed up, and that, in fact, some criminal, greater than even Khorsheed Pasha, is being thus permitted to escape. "There must have been," says this correspondent, "some one behind the scenes in Constantinople, who ordered those iniquities which have been perpetrated, and that 'some one' ought to be brought to light. Better to do it now with a good, than afterwards with a bad grace;—better that the fanatical culprit should be denounced by the Sultan, than by some foreign power. It is no use my doing so, for your publishing what I could now write down as to the supposed name of the

more than notable culprit, would bring down your paper with great sorrow unto grief." If Turkey possessed the same extent of civilisation as that enjoyed by Western Europe, it is probable that the editor of the Levant Herald would have received, before this time, an "official communication" from the Minister of Police, and, in the event of his not being able to furnish the name of this "notable culprit," the consequences might, perhaps, be very unpleasant. Here, however, perfect liberty of speech is permitted, and every one, at least every European, does almost as he pleases.

Everything has a beginning, and in course of time I have no doubt the Turkish Government will see the importance of having all their tribunals open to the public; but in the present instance, no fault can reasonably be found with the manner in which justice has been administered by Fuad Pasha. Innocent blood has been avenged, and retributive punishment has overtaken the guilty. If there were anything to be concealed, it is not probable that Fuad Pasha would have placed a man like Hassan Bey

(Colonel O'Reilly), on the commission at Damascus, nor would he have selected Kaïsserley Achmed Pasha, late Governor-General of Smyrna, as President of that at Beyrout—a man held in such high esteem by the Christian inhabitants of Smyrna, that an earnest and numerously signed petition was forwarded to the Sultan, requesting that his Majesty would not remove him from amongst them. Such an unfounded accusation as that to which I have alluded, is not in accordance with the spirit of fair play that generally characterises the English press. If the correspondent of the *Levant Herald* can "write down the more than supposed name of the more than notable culprit," he is, for the sake of humanity and justice, bound to make it known to the world; but if he cannot do so, then he is equally bound candidly and honourably to avow that he has written under a misconception of the true state of the case.*

Monday, the 20th of August, was a day of

* I have every reason to believe that the editor of the *Levant Herald* does not participate in the sentiments quoted above from his correspondent's letter.

lamentation in Damascus. On that day blood was again shed, but it was the blood of expiation. Again were heard the wailing cries of widows and orphans—who mourned for husbands and fathers lost to them for ever; but this time, the victims were struck down, not by an assassin's hand, but by the bullet and the cord of the executioner. At three o'clock, P.M., the Turkish troops were formed in the public square, called Genek Meidân; 111 prisoners were led out, and in a few moments, the loud report of musketry announced to the people that justice had been accomplished. In the public streets, fifty-six lifeless bodies hung suspended from as many gibbets,—a terrible warning to the guilty city. Amongst the culprits executed, were Ismaïl-Aga, Commissary, and Chamdinin-Oglon, Chief of Police; Moustapha Bey, Faris Aga, and Selim Aga, Captains in the Turkish service; Mahmoud-Rikab, Hassan-Saddi, and Sheikh Mohammed-Cavana, three of the principal Moslem merchants, and Hassan Bey, Moustapha Bey, and Ali Bey, the three sons of Nessiph Pasha.

On the 10th of August, a young girl appeared

before Fuad Pasha. She had been carried off by four Moslems, who cruelly mutilated her mother, and in the most barbarous manner, slaughtered her three brothers before her eyes. She gave a description of the murderers, and the next day they were arrested by the military authorities. Loaded with irons, and conducted to the Seraskeriat, they were at once confronted with the victim of their infamous brutality, who related, with various heart-rending details, the cruelties which they had perpetrated upon her brothers and her mother. The latter had survived the mutilations inflicted by these assassins, and was produced in court as a witness against them. The poor girl rushed to her mother's arms, but after the first feelings of joy had passed, she again remembered her own sorrows, and wildly striking her breast and tearing from her hair the silken tresses which, in happier times, were gaily decked with golden ornaments and coins, she threw herself at the feet of Fuad Pasha, exclaiming:— "You have restored to me my mother; but who, alas, can restore to me my honour!" Deeply moved at this piteous scene, Fuad Pasha at once

ordered the trial of the accused, who, after a short examination, were clearly proved guilty, and instantly condemned to death. On the following morning, at eleven o'clock, the bodies of these four men, named Mubârek-Uban-Mohammed Serivan, Surour Serivan, Ali-Uban Moustapha Sadâka, and Moussa Sadâka, were seen suspended from a gallows in the leading thoroughfare of Damascus.

The number of culprits condemned by the military tribunal, sitting in the mosque of Silimîyeh amounts to 875. Of this number 239 have been executed, 632 have been sentenced to imprisonment, some for a limited period, others for life, while Achmed Pasha and his three companions await the ratification of their sentence from Constantinople. Upwards of 3,500 Mussulman inhabitants of the city have been enrolled as forced conscripts, and sent off to join the army; further arrests are daily effected, and Fuad Pasha is proving, by his energy and determination, that the Sultan has both the will and the power to punish the guilty.

It is, however, much better to prevent crime

than to punish criminals; and Fuad Pasha should therefore lose no time in striking the inhabitants of Aleppo, Latakia, St. Jean d'Acre, and other towns with that salutary fear of his power which may effectually restrain their feelings of fanaticism, and finally put a stop to those disgraceful acts which are still spreading terror amongst the Christians. The Druses are not yet subdued, and their war-song—

"Ya ma hala, ya ma hala,
Debhil nassara, ya ma hala,"*

still resounds over the Mountain. The Moslems of St. Jean d'Acre daily threaten the Christian inhabitants, and the Arab proclamation which has been recently posted upon the doors of the churches, has considerably added to their apprehension and alarm.

The following is a translation of this document:—

"From the nation of Islam to the nation of

* "How sweet it is, how sweet it is,
To slay the Christians, how sweet it is."

Infidelity, of bad faith and impiety; to the nation which, contrary to all right, has become haughty and proud upon the earth.

"To you we say, That you are become insolent and ungrateful; that you have made changes and spread perfidiousness throughout the land in which we had planted only good; and because you obtained support from the Government, you have committed acts such as no people before you ever perpetrated.

"By Allah!—and we repeat it—by Allah, you are only dogs! Your massacre is a sweet triumph; it is pleasant to see the sharp sword of death fall and cause you horrible torments; and now, since you are deprived of everything, and chastisement has overtaken you, you are become as mangy curs.

"May the malediction of Allah fall on you, on your race, and on your Cross, because your religion is an imposture. The religion of Mohammed (may Allah watch over him and salute him!), is based upon truth; and, at a later day, you will see the true religion spread over the whole earth.

"You are supported by the Franks, and you are become proud and insolent; but by Allah! the Franks cannot stand before us, nor combat with us, seeing that our swords are like scythes, and our lances like death-giving darts. Our horses are the fleetest, and our warriors are like fierce lions. Woe to you! Woe to you! In the combat you will see what we shall do. It will take place this year, and then will happen to you what has happened to those of Damascus; for we have no fear, no! not even of a lion, and we care for no one. Your blood, your honour as husbands, your property, all are ours. You have passed the limits fixed, and those who do so shall lose those three things! You are yourselves the authors of your own ruin; for Allah, the Most High, has said in his blessed book: 'You shall eat what your hands have gathered;' and Allah is not unjust to his children.

"By Allah! upon the earth there shall remain only the remembrance of your name, and they shall say, that there was once here such and such a people. For the future we shall speak to you only with the sword. We have shut our

eyes once, twice, thrice, and you have become like proud Pharaohs; but your pride will bring down upon you its own punishment, by the shedding of your blood.

"You pretend that Ayssa (Jesus)—may peace be with him!—is among you. God forbid! for he cannot be satisfied with you. You are destined for the flames, and you will there find the chastisement for what you have done. May Allah not relieve you, for his book says: 'Every offence calls for vengeance!'"

The first detachment of the French expedition arrived on the 16th of August at Beyrout, and on the 25th the 13th regiment of the line, together with a body of cavalry, also disembarked. The Christians dared not exhibit any outward manifestations of joy, but their countenances clearly expressed the exultation and gladness which filled their hearts; and, as the soldiers marched along the Ras-el-Beyrout, numbers of mountaineers mingled in the ranks and presented the men with bouquets as tokens of goodwill and welcome. The French have pitched their tents in the pine-forest, planted 200 years ago by the celebrated

Druse Emîr Fakhîr-ed-Dîn, and which is now the favourite resort of both natives and Europeans. It is no wonder that every one goes there, for it is, without exception, the prettiest spot that can possibly be imagined. The surrounding landscape is exceedingly beautiful, and the most diversified objects, as well as the most charming views, can be seen on all sides. The gay streamers and the gladly-welcomed standards of France now floating amidst the trees, the lively sounds of the music, the brilliant costumes of the Zouaves, together with the various tableaux of Oriental life which momentarily present themselves, must add considerably to the natural beauties of the scene.

The Moslems of Syria are particularly alarmed at the arrival of French troops, as an ancient tradition has predicted the overthrow of Mussulman rule by the power of France. The Mussulmans are all fatalists, and believe that nothing can happen contrary to destiny. That which is written is written, and must be accomplished. Thus, impressed with the belief that the year 1860 would witness their downfall, they were

determined, it is said, to wreak their vengeance upon the native Christians, and, if compelled to retire, to leave nothing behind them but ruins and ashes. The ulemas of Damascus preserve various prophecies, but, perhaps, one of the most remarkable is that which predicts the conquest of Syria by Mehemet-Ali, his defeat in 1840, and the landing of the French in 1860. The following is an extract from this prophecy called—

THE PROPHECY OF JAPHR.

"In the days to come, the following events will happen. Reader, endeavour to understand.

"An Egyptian king, whose name is composed of two words,* and whose troops bear waves upon their heads, will govern Palestine, Jerusalem with its mountains, Aleppo, Damascus, Hamah, Homs, Latakia, Diarbekhr, Marash, Mount Philistine, and Mount Lebanon, as well as all the coast of the sea; he will disarm all this region, he will raise taxes, he will make mothers weep by forcing their sons into his military

* Mehemet-Ali.

service; he will massacre great personages; there will be, in the different districts of this land, so much apprehension and so many disturbances, that a war will break out between this same king and the population of this country, as well as with the people of Mount Lebanon and the mountain of the Philistines;* many places will be destroyed.

"He will govern all these countries only with the assistance of a Philistine king, who will come to his aid.† Having subdued and ruled Syria, he will, at length, think that he is the sole monarch of the universe and that God has created only him; his government will only last 120 months, after which God, who governs the heart and humiliates the proud, will permit that he be chased out of Syria by strong men, who will retake from him all the coasts of the sea, and who will be joined by the population of this same country revolted against him; he will be forced to return into Egypt, after having lost a great number of his troops.

* The Jebel-Druse. † The Emir Beshir.

"Then will commence the reign of the Ottomans in Syria, during which time there will be a perfect tranquillity; but injustice will take the place of equity; they will govern Mount Lebanon, that to which the ancient kings had never been able to attain. This reign will last from the fall of the Egyptian domination, the year of the Hegira 1257 (A. D. 1840), to the month of Jomad-thkar, 1860. From this latter date will commence disturbances, confusion, agitation, and frequent massacres upon the roads; so that no one will dare to go from one place to another. Injustice will then show itself openly; commerce will be ruined; the governors will be bribed by money and become corrupt; the kings will disagree, men will hate each other, charity will diminish, so that the non-Christian nations will be agreed amongst themselves and upon one side against Christianity; the Christians will unite on the other side; there will be great massacres. France will then embark troops, which will land on the sea-coast near Mount Philistine, in the month of Hégé, in the year 1860.

"The Christians will assemble on Mount

Lebanon, and the non-Christian nations on Mount Philistine, and in the environs of Sidon and Tyre. The Great King, learning then that the non-Christian nations are agreed amongst themselves against Christianity, will declare himself its defender in the month of Rajeb (June), in the year 1861, having a strong force forming eighty-four armies, each of which will be composed of 14,000 men, carrying with them the invincible arm + (the cross). . . . .

"The districts of the Turkomans will be completely ruined, and the greater part of their inhabitants will perish by the sword. They will be entirely overrun. Great personages will be executed and their property confiscated.

"The Mussulmans will then re-assemble, and allying themselves with the Arabs, Kurds, and Metuâlis, will collect together at Carthagenna, in the year 1861, in the month of Hégé, and they will rise against the Christians; there will be fierce combats; thirty-five thousand Christians will perish, and they will be driven back three times; but the Mussulmans will lose more

(45,000 combatants), because they have despised the holy cross.

"In the district of Adnée, the Christians will triumph over the Ottoman; there will be great wars, and the hair even of the children will become white; the overthrow will be complete; there will be such terror and such panic, that the greater number will say: 'Would to God that we never were born!' Then the King of Egypt will come to their assistance, and he will persecute all the Christians in his dominions. The rich will be massacred, their property confiscated, and all reduced to the greatest misery. Then the King of Ethiopia, learning the fury and fanaticism of the Mussulmans, and to what an extent they have carried the persecution against the Christians, will come into Egypt in the year 1862; he will put everything to fire and sword, and, in 1863, he will come to Jerusalem and he will ornament it.

"In 1863, there will be terrible wars at Aleppo, in which eighty-four thousand combatants will perish, without reckoning the women and the children. The King of Egypt himself will be

killed in the environs of Aleppo; all the districts near the city, as Jalâak, Diarbekhr, Hamah, and Homs will be given up to the flames, and they will be like unto Sodom and Gomorrah.

"In 1864, there will be perfect tranquillity at Baalbek, as well as in Mount Lebanon; there will be neither combat nor war; the Christians will repair there from all sides, seeking it as their last asylum against the persecution of the Mussulmans.

"At Damascus, the Mussulmans will assemble in crowds; there will be an excessive scarcity of provisions; twenty-four combats will take place there, so that the streets will be submerged with blood. The Mussulmans, through hatred of the Christians, will lay waste the Holy Places. The Christians then, on the other hand, will agree together and destroy Mecca (the tomb of the Prophet). The great ulemas will be massacred; the calls to prayer from the minarets will be abolished in 1866. They will rebuild Jerusalem; the government will be then in the hands of the Christians, peace will reign, charity will take the place of hatred and jealousy; the rich and the

poor will be perfectly contented, so that the living, when passing through the cemeteries, will call upon the dead to come forth and participate in the general peace and plenty, and behold these happy days crowned with joy and gladness. This peace and this tranquillity will last from 1867 till the year 2050. At this period disturbances and wars will again commence, as well as hatred and jealousy; lewdness will be committed without shame, publicly, in the open day. Women will lose respect for their husbands; men, without any reverence, will enter on horseback into the churches. The good God will take vengeance. A certain prelate, named Gerasmos, bishop of Sidon, will preach in the environs; arrived at Capernaum, he will form an impious connection with a certain Jewess, called Lahaâho, who will become pregnant, and give to the world Anti-Christ."

LETTER IX.

THE SYRIAN RELIEF FUND.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 5, 1860.

A GENERAL meeting of the English residents in Constantinople was held on last Thursday, at Missirie's hotel, for the purpose of raising subscriptions in aid of the sufferers by the recent massacres in Syria. His Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer, H. B. M. Ambassador, was in the chair.

The following resolutions were proposed :—

"1. That a committee be appointed in Constantinople for the purpose of collecting funds for the relief of the sufferers by the late massacres in Syria, and that the funds so collected shall be applied in such a manner as may be most immediately conducive to the end in view.

"2. That it is desirable that the committee shall be formed without any distinction of creed or

nationality; and, therefore, that a proposal shall be made to the chiefs of the several nationalities in Constantinople, suggesting an amalgamation of the several committees that have been already formed, or that may be at present in contemplation.

"3. That inasmuch as His Majesty the Sultan has given undoubted proofs of paternal solicitude for his Christian subjects, and the Ottoman Government have been most energetic in their endeavours to alleviate the wants of the sufferers; this meeting is of opinion, that an opportunity of co-operating in the effort now being organised, should be afforded to such members of the Turkish government or native society as may desire to avail themselves of such a means of expressing their active sympathies with the movement."

The third resolution was altogether disapproved of by the meeting; the second met with only a qualified approval, but the first was read by His Excellency and passed unanimously. The following committee was then appointed:—

PRESIDENT.
His Excellency Sir H. L. Bulwer, G.C.B.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.
His Excellency James Williams, American Minister to the Porte.
J. Drummond Hay, Esq., H.B.M., Acting Consul-General.

COMMITTEE.

R. J. Keune, Esq., Dutch Chargé d'Affaires.	Rev. Dr. Dwight.
T. N. Black, Esq.	Rev. C. G. Curtis.
C. S. Hanson, Esq.	N. Butt, Esq.
N. Privilegio, Esq.	A. A. Fry, Esq.
J. Lewis Farley, Esq.	C. C. Lafontaine, Esq.
	E. Lafontaine, Esq.

J. N. Abbott, Esq.

TREASURERS.
Messrs. C. S. Hanson & Co.

HON. SECRETARY.
James McCoan, Esq.

The documents forwarded from Beyrout by the Anglo-American relief committee state as follows:—

One hundred and fifty towns and villages have been pillaged and burned, together with their churches, monasteries, schools, &c.; all the Christian houses in Damascus, as well as the European consulates, have been destroyed. The

consuls of Holland and of the United States have been wounded.

Sixteen thousand Christians, men, women, and children, besides Mr. Graham and several other missionaries, have been massacred in cold blood.

Three thousand Christian women and girls have been sold as slaves, for a few shillings each, to the Moslems and Bedawîn.

Seventy thousand to eighty thousand Christians, including ten thousand widows, are without homes or shelter. Many thousands have fled to Beyrout, and are now lying about in the open air, depending for the daily necessaries of life upon the charity of the inhabitants. But it is obvious that however liberal this charity may be, it must soon become exhausted, while the destitution and suffering, instead of diminishing, must necessarily increase.

LETTER X.

WHO WERE THE AGGRESSORS.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 12, 1860.

THERE is nothing more easy than to make assertions when there is little probability of their being contradicted; and every one knows that, no matter how false the assertions may be, it is only necessary that they should be repeated sufficiently often, in order that they should be at length received as truths. No assertion, for example, could be more incorrect than the one which has been recently made in England, namely, that "the Maronites were the aggressors;" yet I have no doubt that that assertion will be repeated, until, in time, it will come to be regarded as an evident and palpable fact. It would be equally easy for me to assert that "the Druses were the aggressors;" and, considering the personal expe-

rience which I have had, and the knowledge of Syria which I possess, such an assertion might, perhaps, carry as much weight as the contrary assertions of those who, although they have never seen the country, hesitate not to laud the Druses as men of honour and true types of chivalry, while, at the same time, they brand the Christians as despicable intriguers, utterly devoid of principle or religion. But, supposing that the assertion, so recklessly made, were true, and that in the recent civil war, as it is called, the Maronites were, indeed, the aggressors, a moment's consideration would show that such a fact ought not to militate against them. If my next-door neighbour amuse himself by constantly abusing me, if, day by day, insult is added to insult, if my premises are continually invaded, if, one day, he take a fancy to my cattle, the next day to my crops, and the next day again to my orchard; if, in fact, my family are outraged, my servant killed, and my house no longer protect me from his attacks, and if, at last, finding the law will give me no redress, I lose all patience and strike down my tormentor, will the verdict of man or the

justice of Heaven condemn me as the aggressor? Who is there that, recounting the deeds which are now taking place in Italy, will have the hardihood to stand forward, and declare before the world that "the Italians were the aggressors!" They have, it is true, fallen upon their foes, but before God and man, the true aggressors have been the tyrants who so long oppressed them, and who have now fled terrified at the clanking sounds of their victims' broken chains. Is there, then, no sympathy to be felt for those brave Maronites, who, for twelve centuries, have held their faith unsullied in the midst of the enemies of the cross, and who, although perhaps wanting in that perfect Christian spirit and that complete tolerance for the opinions of others, which, it is so well known, exist among ourselves, yet prefer to relinquish lands and life, rather than prove false to the belief which their fathers taught them? Is there no allowance to be made for those poor Christians of Mount Lebanon, who, for so many years, have suffered such cruel wrongs, and endured, with a surpassing patience, the unheard-of tyranny of the Druses?

Fortunately, however, for the cause of truth and justice, there is no difficulty in adducing evidence amply sufficient to prove that the Maronites were not the aggressors. The Rev. Mr. Eddy, an American missionary in Lebanon, and a gentleman who cannot be supposed to have any undue partiality towards the Maronites, has given some account of the war in a recent number of the *Evangelical Christendom*. Speaking of the origin of these disturbances, he says:—"In looking for the causes of this war, we shall find them, first and chiefly, in the aggressions made for more than a year past by the Druses upon the Christians; such as entering false claims to their lands, and browbeating them to their surrender; lying in wait for the Christians when travelling, and then robbing and murdering them, thus rendering some part of the country well nigh impassable; also breaking into secluded houses, plundering them and killing the inhabitants. These things have been done, to a greater or lesser extent, in many parts of Lebanon, but more particularly on the mountain and in the plains adjacent to Sidon. While thus, with that

consummate craft for which they are famous, the Druses, by constant aggressions, have been provoking the Christians to attack them in self-defence, they have, at the same time, made themselves appear to be averse to war, openly declaring, 'we do not want to fight!' while yet, in reality, goading on the Christians to the very act. Multitudes of discerning men have been deceived by these specious pretences of the Druses." The Rev. Mr. Bird, another American missionary, writing from Deir-el-Kamr to Consul-General Moore, on the 28th of May last, fully bears out the Rev. Mr. Eddy's statements, for he says:— "The Druses seem most evidently the aggressors, in this region at least, and the Christians here have received commendatory letters from the Pasha on account of their forbearance." But, perhaps, the strongest evidence on this subject is to be found in the letter of Mr. Cyril Graham to Lord Dufferin, dated Beyrout, July 18. Lord Dufferin, now British Commissioner in Syria, when transmitting this letter to Lord John Russell, very forcibly expressed his opinion with regard to the credibility of Mr. Graham, and no

one, I imagine, will be inclined to doubt the sincerity of Lord Dufferin. His Lordship says that Lord John Russell "may rely with implicit confidence on the accuracy of all Mr. Graham's statements of fact, as his knowledge of Arabic, and his personal acquaintance both with the Druse and Maronite populations, combined with the opportunities he has had of visiting the places where these tragedies have occurred, will have given him peculiar facilities for arriving at the truth." Now, after this testimony on the part of Lord Dufferin, few persons, I anticipate, will be likely to doubt the statements made by Mr. Graham; yet this gentleman, in his letter dated the 18th of July last, distinctly and unequivocally says, "The Druses were the first aggressors!"

The impartial evidence afforded by the statements of these three gentlemen, would alone be sufficient to prove the innocence of the Maronites; but there is still further evidence of, perhaps, a more conclusive character, and one which, coming from an official source, I earnestly recommend to the consideration of those members of parliament who may feel inclined to stand forth as the

champions of the Druses. The Rev. Mr. Eddy, as quoted above, says that we shall find the causes of this war, "first and chiefly in the aggressions made for more than a year past by the Druses upon the Christians," but the official despatches from our Consuls in Syria go even farther back than the period stated by Mr. Eddy, and clearly prove that, for the last two years, the Druses have in every instance been the aggressors. The following extracts from the despatches speak for themselves, and I shall, therefore, place them before you without explanation or comment:—

No. I.

Consul-General Moore to the Earl of Malmesbury.

BEYROUT, *September* 14, 1858.

"I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship upon the very unsatisfactory state of affairs in this country.

"Besides individual murders here and there, a week ago a whole family was massacred at a village a few hours distant from Beyrout. The murderers are Druses, and their victims Christians. The occasion was revenge upon the father, for having, about fifteen years back, killed a Druse, as it would seem, in self-defence. The

assassins surrounded the house at dusk, and, while the family were at dinner, a number of them broke into it and slaughtered the inmates, namely, the father, his wife, their son, and a guest, who was betrothed to their daughter; the son, attempting to escape, was cut to pieces."

No. II.

Consul Finn to the Earl of Malmesbury.

JERUSALEM, *November* 8, 1858.

"I HAVE the honour to report that Mr. Vice-Consul Abela, of Saida, informs me of rumours of several meetings of Druses in the Lebanon which are believed to menace serious consequences to the Christians of Deir-el-Kamr and Zahléh.

"These are said to be under the secret sanction of Emir Beshir Ahmed in revenge for their constant opposition to his tyrannical government.

"Others attribute these movements to the remains of the old factions, and say that his Excellency Khorsheed Pasha of Beyrout is in concert with them.

"It is also reported that in Zahléh a large conspiracy of 400 individuals has been detected, and that the names embrace not only Druses, but also Moslems and Metawaly, the object being a general massacre of Christians. Whether ill or well founded, the rumour has spread great alarm in the Mountain."

No. III.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

BEYROUT, *August* 25, 1859.

"THE day after the [outbreak at Beitmeri two Christian villages were burnt and plundered by the Druses.

"My colleagues of France and Russia have each sent an officer of their Consulates to the Pasha's present quarters in order to report to their respective Chiefs upon his Excellency's proceedings and the course of events. I have refrained from doing so myself, conceiving such a step on my part to be opposed to the spirit of your Excellency's instructions."

No. IV.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.

BEYROUT, *September* 1, 1859.

"ON the occasion of a quarrel between some Maronites and Druses at Hasbeiya, in the Anti-Lebanon, subsequent to the affray at Beitmeri and the burning of the Christian villages in the Meten, the Christians have petitioned the Turkish Government to be placed under direct Turkish rule in order to be relieved from the trespasses of the Druse Chiefs. A detachment of regular troops was forthwith sent to Hasbeiya and the petition is taken into consideration."

No. V.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

BEYROUT, *September* 30, 1859.

"THE Governor-General, Khorsheed Pasha, is still absent in the Lebanon with Atta Bey, for the settlement of the questions arising out of the conflict at Beitmeri. A sum of 29,000 piastres has been assessed on the Druses, who burnt and plundered property subsequent to this event. This sum is not considered adequate, and but a small portion of the pillaged property has been restored, the authors escaping hitherto unpunished."

No. VI.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

DAMASCUS, *September* 30, 1859.

"IT is with deep regret that I am obliged to make my quarterly report to your Excellency in a tone of complaint, but, since my last, matters have not gone on satisfactorily; discontent has been gaining ground, and little restraint is used in giving expression to it." . . . . . "It is reported that the Druses of the Haurân are arming, and it is feared that they may join their co-religionists of the Lebanon and attack the Maronites."

No. VII.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

BEYROUT, *April* 2, 1860.

"IN the neighbourhood of Sidon murders and highway robberies have become very frequent : nine cases of murder of Christians and Jews by Druse and Metuâli bandits have been reported within the last fifteen months. This is attributable to the laxity of the local authorities in the pursuit and punishment of the delinquents, whose places of abode are well known. It is no longer considered safe to move in that direction without an armed escort."

No. VIII.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

BEYROUT, *May* 18, 1860.

"I REGRET to have to report a marked increase within the last fortnight of agitation and insecurity in the Druse district of the Lebanon. Assassinations and reprisals are of almost daily occurrence between the Christians and Druses. The last case took place two days ago. A party of Christians on their way from Deir-el-Kamr to Djezzin were attacked by Druses. It is known for certain that four of the former were killed, including a Maronite priest ; report states that the victims were nine in number."

No. IX.

Memorial from the Christians of the Mixed Districts in Mount Lebanon to Khorsheed Pasha, dated May 20, 1860.

"YOUR Excellency's servants, the Christians living amongst the Druses, beg to state that the outrages and the aggression we are on all sides exposed to on the part of the Druses and their Mokatâdgis, during recent times and up to the present moment, are notorious; so that our tranquillity and the safety of our blood and property are destroyed. Their acts of violence towards us in killing our co-religionists, both secretly and openly, have become well known to all; their wish is evidently to compass our ruin and entire extermination. Their assassination, premeditatedly and by surprise, of the four individuals from the village of Kitoolé at Khan Mahomed Ali Bey Shebib, and openly on the high road of the priest of Ibtedeen El Lockesh, also of a monk and four individuals with him near Kahloonié in the Shoof, and likewise of the priest of Maâssir El-Fakhar in his own house, besides the recent murder by them of the Superior of the Convent of Ameek (the circumstances of this atrocious case were at the time submitted to your Excellency), must have already reached your Excellency's ears.

"The Druses have now assembled at Mukhtâra, the residence of Saïd Bey Djoublat, from every part of the

country, and have intercepted all the leading highways, owing to which we have not been able to come to Beyrout and present our protest against these barbarous proceedings. Several of our co-religionists, scattered in different (mixed) villages, have been compelled to fly in order to escape persecution, and have taken refuge in Christian villages for safety, especially those living in the Arkoob and Gharb El Bekaâ, whose Christian inhabitants have been attacked by Druses. With a view to avoid collision with them, they fled with their families, abandoning both their homes and their crops, and took asylum in the town of Zahléh. They were, however, overtaken by their Druse assailants, who beat them, wounded and disarmed them, and sacked their property.

"The Druse Mokatâdgis, during the past times have never been punished or checked by the Government for any of their misdeeds and outrages upon us, the slaves of your Government, more particularly for the horrible acts which Sheik Youssuf Abd el Melek ventured to commit last year, in burning and sacking the dwellings of and killing innocent Christians, without being called to account by your Excellency. These functionaries have, besides, trespassed upon the rights of the Porte, by withholding the tribute which they have collected over and above what is due by the inhabitants to the Treasury, and which they have appropriated to themselves,—a fact which is positively known to your Excellency.

"To have thus allowed them to indulge in these outrages against us, and the fact of their having been

treated with such leniency inasmuch as not even to be called on to refund the tribute which they collected in the name of the Government, has encouraged them to oppress us to the present extent; so that we have now been reduced to the necessity of defending ourselves, and to seek, by all means in our power, for relief from the oppression and distress surrounding us from these foes, who seemed determined to exterminate us. We believe that we are justified in resorting to these extremes by all laws, natural, judicial, and administrative.

"We venture, therefore, to submit to your Excellency this humble Memorial, and to entreat you to be pleased to take into your benevolent consideration our position, and to adopt means to deliver us from the oppression of these cruel enemies, who have resolved to annihilate us. We do so because we can no longer tolerate such glaring outrages and oppression, much less to continue under a rule which is utterly devoid of all justice, to which we have been compelled to submit in past times.

"We, at the same time, offer heartfelt prayers to the Almighty to preserve to us your noble and exalted person, and to strengthen and consolidate for ever the power of your Government.

(Signed) { "The Christians of the Mixed Districts of Mount Lebanon."

The Maronites have been brought before the bar of public opinion in Europe. They are

charged with the crime of having been "the aggressors," but their accusers have not put forward a single proof of guilt against them. Public opinion, which is seldom unjust, will not, I feel assured, condemn the innocent upon the mere assertion of their enemies, in face of such unimpeachable evidence as I have here adduced. Upon the evidence of our consuls alone, I am justified in demanding a verdict in their favour, and I feel confident that that verdict must be—the Maronites were not the aggressors.

Since the first outbreak of hostilities in Mount Lebanon, the sympathies of the French government and of the people have been, unequivocally, with the Maronites, while unfortunately, amongst a certain class of Englishmen, a contrary feeling has hitherto existed, a feeling created, I have no doubt, by expressions and opinions emanating from those who are, naturally, deemed to be authorities in such matters, but who, I fear, allow themselves to be influenced by their own personal prejudices and led astray from the truth, by the political exigencies of the occasion.

The days of chivalry are, it is true, long past, and we appear to forget that a Richard and an Edward once carried the sacred standard and led their followers to battle against the enemies of the cross, but the days are, I trust, far distant, when Englishmen will permit themselves to be seduced from the paths of justice and honour, and lend a willing ear to misstatements and deceit. The recent debates in parliament upon the Syrian question tend very much towards this object, for they evince either an unpardonable want of good faith or an unparalleled ignorance of the subject. I prefer attributing the statements which have been made to the latter, for I cannot believe that any member of the House of Commons would stand up and declare before Europe that which he did not, at least, believe to be true. But will France, will Syria be of the same opinion?

I shall not here seek to unravel the crooked and interested policy that would leave this historic land a prey to continued anarchy and confusion, but feeble, indeed, must that policy be, which requires for its support a total abnegation

of the truth, and an entire subversion of the facts. In Syria, when an Arab desires to pledge himself more solemnly than usual, he says: I promise on the word of an Englishman; but, how long will this unbounded confidence in English honour continue, when the Christians find themselves the objects of unfounded calumnies, and see even the very facts perverted and made use of to their disadvantage? How long will the English name continue to be respected in Syria, when the Christians hear themselves branded, not only as the originators of all those disturbances which date from the 29th of May last, but with a subsequent ferocity and bloodthirstiness that, if true, would take from them the sympathies of honest men, and, justly, disgrace them in the eyes of Europe? Lord John Russell has stated in the House of Commons, "as an instance of the fierceness of the different races," that "Fuad Pasha having asked the bishops of the different Christian sects how many of the eight thousand adult males in that part of the country ought, in their opinion, to be put to death in expiation of the massacres which had

taken place, the bishops, by their signatures to a paper, required that no less than four thousand six hundred of the eight thousand should be executed, and it was with great difficulty that Fuad Pasha and the commissioners got them to reduce their demands to one thousand two hundred, which, they said, was the lowest that ought to be sacrificed."*

In answer to this statement, the Christian bishops declared that "they have never signed any such paper, and, therefore, that it would be impossible to produce such a document." Lord John Russell is, however, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the world, justly, gives his lordship credit for judgment and veracity. No one ought to be better informed, and yet Lord John Russell has been mistaken. The calumny, nevertheless, is repeated, and coming from such an official source, I am not at all surprised that it is implicitly believed. I, for one, should never think of doubting anything that fell from the lips of Lord John Russell; his lordship's

* Speech of Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, February 8, 1861.

long and noble career, untarnished by the slightest stain upon his honour or his truth, is, in itself, a guarantee of good faith, and I feel assured that when that accusation was made, his lordship believed it to be true; but when the Minister of Foreign Affairs is thus, perhaps unintentionally, misinformed, how careful ought we to be in giving an unqualified credence to the assertions of those gentlemen who, neither from personal knowledge of Syria, nor official connection with the country, are at all in a position to enlighten us upon the subject of which they speak.

The following letter has been addressed by the bishops of Lebanon to the European commissioners at Beyrout:—

BEYROUT, *March* 10, 1861.

It was with affliction and grief that we read in the *Indépendance Belge* of the 11th February, the article of which a copy is herewith enclosed. If this article, founded upon the declarations made in the House of Commons on the 8th February by Lord John Russell, concerned only ourselves,

we would not be at all anxious to refute it; but as it is the Christian populations whom it is sought to represent as unworthy of the sympathies which their misfortunes have attracted, not alone on the part of the government of His Majesty the Sultan, but of the great European powers who have so generously come to their assistance, it becomes a duty for us, to re-establish the facts, and, in doing so, we know that we shall not appeal in vain to the recollection of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, to the candour of Lord Dufferin, whose meaning must have been misunderstood, and to the sentiments of justice of the representatives of the European powers.

When his Excellency Fuad Pasha considered it his duty to proceed with the repression of the Druses, he sent for the Christian bishops, and besought them to recommend to him some Christian notables, conscientious men, and well acquainted with passing events, who could give him such information as would enable him to discover the guilty. The bishops observed to his Excellency, that their sacred character interdicted them from interfering in a question which

was in the exclusive province of justice, further than to point out some persons capable of giving him the information which he required. The bishops then mentioned the names of sixteen Christians, chosen from among the most honourable of the laity, who were, subsequently, charged by his Excellency to furnish him with the information that he wanted, and who engaged themselves, by oath, to speak only the truth. These notables remitted, some days afterwards, to his Excellency, a list of the names of four thousand six hundred Druses, Mussulmans, and Metuâlis, inhabiting the Lebanon, the Anti-Lebanon, and the Haurân, and taken from among thirty thousand combatants, and not solely from among eight thousand Druses, as it is pretended; indicating, at the same time, the nature of the crimes which were charged against each of the individuals comprised in the list.

His Excellency again summoned the bishops in order to tell them, that he knew very well the Druses were guilty, but that the number mentioned was too considerable, and that it would be necessary to point out those who were the most

culpable. The bishops replied that they knew nothing whatever of the list nor of the persons who were there mentioned, and that it would not accord with their position to interfere in the affair. The sixteen Christian notables, however, again called upon by Fuad Pasha, explained that the list which they had sent him, at his request, was only an indication calculated to enlighten justice, and that, most certainly, neither they nor the Christian populations ever thought of demanding that the repression should comprise such a considerable number of victims. Nevertheless, upon the demand of his Excellency, they then reduced the list to one thousand two hundred of the most compromised, leaving altogether to justice the care of establishing their guilt, and to the government that of determining the extent and the nature of the punishments.

The bishops, then, have not in any way interfered with the repression, and the notables have only furnished certain information which his Excellency had himself demanded. While as to the document which has been spoken of in the

House of Commons, the undersigned bishops declare that they have never signed any such paper, and therefore that it would be impossible to produce it.

Such are the facts; in recalling them to the recollection of the commission, the undersigned bishops venture to ask, in the name of the Christians, from whom it is now sought to withdraw, by this strange calumny, the sympathies of the civilised world, that this declaration should be made known to their respective governments and to the public, so that the interest of which the Christians of Syria are the object, may not be diminished by the feeling that they have shown themselves to be unworthy of it.

(Signed) Tobia Aoun, Bishop of Beyrout.
Butros Boustani, Bishop of St. Jean d'Acre, and Assistant Archbishop of Sidon and Tyre.
Basil Châhiat, Bishop of Zahleh and the Bekâa.
Malathios, Bishop of Baalbek and its dependencies.

The above letter affords a complete and satisfactory explanation of the matter alluded to by Lord John Russell; but, after all, it is nothing less than an absurdity to raise a question upon this point, as the greater or lesser number of Druses who may merit death can be of little consequence, in face of the notorious fact, that the trials at Beyrout have been rendered a complete nullity, that the sentences have not been executed, and that, with the exception of a few culprits exiled for a short period to the pleasant island of Candia, not a single Druse has been punished for the crimes which have been committed.

LETTER XI.

THE FRENCH IN SYRIA.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 19, 1860.

WHEN France sent her soldiers to Syria, she was not alone actuated by the natural instincts of humanity, which all Europe, outraged at the crimes that had been committed, equally entertained; she was also impelled by those feelings of honour and duty which neither individuals nor states can legitimately resist. France has been for centuries the recognised protectress of the Christians in the East, and the Maronites possess a charter which gives them a claim that has ever been acknowledged by the successors of Saint Louis.

This charter, addressed to the Prince and Patriarch of the Maronites, and granted by Louis IX., as a reward for assistance rendered during the Crusades, is as follows :—

"Our heart was filled with joy when we beheld your son Simon, at the head of 25,000 men, advancing to meet us on your part, in order to convey to us the expression of your sentiments and to offer us the various gifts, as well as the beautiful horses, which you have sent us. Indeed, the sincere friendship which we commenced to feel for the Maronites, during our sojourn at Cyprus, where they are established, is now much increased. We are convinced that this nation, which we find settled here under the name of Saint-Maroun, is a part of the French nation, inasmuch as its friendship for us is not unlike the friendship which the French feel for each other. In consequence, it is only just that you and all the Maronites should enjoy the same protection as the French enjoy with us, and that you be eligible for, and admitted into, employments equally as they are themselves. We invite you, illustrious Prince, to labour with zeal for the welfare of the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, and also to occupy yourself in creating a nobility from amongst the most deserving, as it is the custom to do in France. And you, my Lord

Patriarch, Bishops, and Clergy; and you, Maronite people, as well as your noble Prince; we see with considerable satisfaction your firm attachment to your religion and your respect for the head of the Church, the successor of Saint Peter; we beseech you to preserve this respect and to remain always unshaken in your faith. With regard to ourselves and our successors on the throne of France, we promise to give you, you and your people, the same protection as the French themselves enjoy, and constantly to do everything which may be necessary for your welfare.

"Given near Saint-Jean d'Acre, the 21st day of May, 1250, and in the twenty-fourth year of our reign."

When Louis IX. declared that the Maronites formed part of the French nation, he was well aware that, a century and a half previously, they had fought under the sacred standard, side by side with the crusaders of Godefroy de Bouillon; intermarriages had mingled the blood of the two races, and they dwelt together under the rule of the Frank kings of Jerusalem, until, upon the destruction of that kingdom, the last French crusaders

sought and found a refuge amongst their brothers the Maronites of Mount Lebanon. It is but natural. therefore, that this people, following the traditions of their fathers, should look upon the French as their allies, and it is not at all surprising that France should be considered as their acknowledged protectress.

This right of protection over the Christians which France exercises in Syria, is derived not alone from that custom or general consent, which under the name of *adhet* is, after the Koran, the common law of the Ottomans; it is also founded upon imperial concessions, which, under the name of capitulations, go back as far as the commencement of the sixteenth century. The first of these firmans was granted to Francis I., in the year 1535, and was, under a new form, a kind of treaty of commerce and friendship between France and Turkey. In it, were fully stated the various conditions which founded the commercial rights of France in the Levant. Henry IV., Louis XIV., and Louis XV., obtained the renewal of those concessions, and each time they received more extension, more force, and more

solemnity. Amongst the privileges which they accorded to France, the most important, without doubt, was that of conferring upon her the right of protecting the Christian religion in the states of the Sultan. This protection, increasing from time to time, extended to the holy sepulchre, to the churches, to the bishops, to the priests, as well as to the various religious orders, and, by an interpretation which was rarely contested, surrounded, to a certain extent, the Christian inhabitants themselves. Thus, this religious protection became insensibly a civil protection, that guaranteed the people from the exactions and outrages to which they had formerly been exposed, and the ambassadors and the consuls of France considered it a duty to intervene, without ceasing, in favour of their co-religionists.

This right of protection, consecrated by a possession of three centuries, was, for a time, lost to France, when, in 1840, the Christians of Mount Lebanon were taken from the rule of the old Emîr Beshîr, and handed over to that of the Kaïmacams, who are the mere delegates and creatures of the Pasha of Sidon. From that

time, the Christians have known no peace, and although in 1845 Europe again intervened, the state of the Maronites has become every year more miserable and hopeless, and the mountain has never been free from anarchy and disorder. Under the rule of the Emîr Beshîr, life and property were perfectly secure; no man's goods could be wrongfully seized, and no one, no matter how exalted his position, was permitted to extort anything from the people, or force them to render services without a fair remuneration. The taxes, it is true, were heavy and rigorously exacted; but, as security was complete and assistance was always afforded when necessary, the peasants were happy and contented. Cities and villages that had been deserted were re-inhabited, and untilled lands were again brought into cultivation. Loans were made to those who re-occupied these abandoned villages, so as to enable them to repair the houses and furnish themselves with stock; every encouragement was, in fact, held out to ensure production, so much so, that an immunity from taxes for three years was frequently granted. Scarcely, however, was the Emîr Beshîr expelled

and the strong arm removed which had kept every one in due subordination to the ruling power, than resistance to authority began to replace obedience, peculation and waste to be substituted for honesty and economy; the Arabs again to encroach on the settled inhabitants; the newly re-peopled villages and lands to be gradually abandoned; until, at the present moment, there is so little security for the person or property of the Christian population, that it may almost be said no longer to exist.

Since the year 1840, France has been often importuned by the Maronites, and called upon to remember the ancient charter of Saint Louis. On the 15th of July, 1845, the Count de Montalembert endeavoured to move public opinion, by detailing, in the Chamber of Peers, some of the frightful scenes which were at that time being enacted. "The latest letters which have been received," he says, "announce the continuance of hostilities, of depredations, and of assassinations committed by the Druses, who commit unheard-of atrocities in the villages of the Maronites. Little children are torn limb from limb; the

priests are massacred; the old men are burned alive; while the women suffer such horrible usage as I dare not speak of before the tribune. In fine, the Druses perpetrate all those horrible crimes that have ever been related in history." In 1846, the position of the Maronites was in no way improved, and the following address, dated the 17th October in that year, will give some idea of their melancholy condition.

"*Address to France, from Abd' Allah Boustani, Bishop of Sidon, of Tyre, of Saint-Jean-d'Acre, of Nazareth the Glorious, and of all the villages and towns from Beyrout to Jerusalem the Noble.*

"We are now compelled to announce to you that the position of the Maronites is in no way ameliorated; that they are still the victims of misfortune, of sorrow, of pain, of degradation, and of extreme poverty. It would be impossible to detail how precarious is their existence, and how little security is left to them. They have been placed in dependence on, and under the government of, their enemies the Druses; those

ravishing wolves destroying the flock confided to their care, and completing the general misery by now exacting the tribute for five years. A tyrannous claim, which excites the heart with a generous indignation, depresses the courage of the wise, and fills with anger the souls of the sensitive and the high-spirited. Who, indeed, can see with indifference these barbarians give the law to a civilised people? Who can see, without shuddering, these slaves of Satan pretend to govern and protect the faithful? and that, too, after having, at three different times, plundered and burned their houses, shed their blood, corrupted their children, dishonoured their wives and their daughters, trampled upon their crosses and destroyed their churches; after having, in fine, driven them into the solitudes and the deserts, and overwhelmed them with vexations to such an extent that many amongst them died with cold and hunger.

"The calamities that the Maronites have had to endure from their cruel enemies are beyond description; nevertheless, these enemies are the men who are now supposed to protect them, to

govern them, and watch over everything that interests them! Who can learn without the most intense indignation, that these sanguinary barbarians kill the innocent—rob the widow and the orphan—cause all the wealth of the Maronites to pass through their hands—gathering before their eyes the fruit of their sweat and of their blood—consuming and wasting the provisions destined to sustain the lives of themselves and their children? Yet, these are the men who rule over the Christians in these unhappy times.

"How can it possibly be that those who deny the existence of God should be the guardians of His people? What! the enemies of the religion of Christ—those who laugh at this holy faith—who ardently desire its utter destruction—who by cunning or by force lead a great many of the simple and the weak-minded into the practice of idolatry—who do not cease to commit actions the most infamous, such as the abduction of girls and young boys; these are the men who govern here, and who direct the people of the Messiah!

"Those to whom every abomination is permitted—those whom the sacred books and the prophets prohibit not from the pillage of their neighbours' goods—those who consider themselves as the masters of the world, regarding every other people as their servants and slaves; are these the men who ought to be entrusted with the care of preserving the tranquillity and the liberty of the Maronites? No, certainly not; that would be to ensure their entire destruction, and the annihilation even of their name.

"From whom, then, will come the assistance that we have a right to expect? Where is the zeal of the Christian kings for our interests? Where is the protection which they have promised to the Maronites? Where is their glory, their magnificence, and the grandeur of their power? Where is the assistance which they owe to the oppressed? Have they, then, no longer any fear of God? Have they lost their magnanimous zeal for the interests of the religion of the Messiah, since they look on with indifference at the horrible acts committed by our enemies—those monsters, who, like whales, swallow us up

while still alive, and destroy everything belonging to us, leaving only the memory of their infamies? Are these things the signs and the proofs of the protection of Christian kings towards the oppressed Maronites? Once again,—where is their zeal for the faith of Christ? Where are their efforts to propagate that holy religion, and bring back to the fold the scattered sheep? Where shall we find that unanimity of the Christians, which, in days past, made their strength and their glory?

"Ah! we conjure them that they should now think of our misfortunes. Have they no feeling for our sorrows? Have they not heard our piercing cries? Have they not understood the insupportable excess of our misery? Are they ignorant that our enemies have taken everything which we possessed—articles of great price as well as of little value—and to such an extent that nothing now remains in our miserable dwellings? All the property that we had amassed with such trouble, by our labour and industry, we now see in the hands of our enemies, the Druses, the Metuâlis, the Mussulmans! Our

crops, even our food they take from us, and, alas! they have left us nought but the natural covering of our bones! Nevertheless they rule over us.

"Everything which has not been consumed by fire is become the prey of these barbarians. Who could calculate the amount of what they have robbed us—of copper—of silver—of wax candles—of candelabra—of beds—of vestments—of sacerdotal ornaments—of chalices, &c. &c.? Add to this the animals, such as horses, mules, camels, beasts of burden, oxen, sheep and goats. Nay, more; they have taken even the title-deeds of our vineyards, of our gardens and of our lands; they have stolen the registers of all the churches, houses, and colleges in the districts inhabited by Christians in common with these ferocious enemies. The Maronites now possess neither moveable nor immoveable property; the former has been pillaged and burned; the title-deeds of the latter have been torn away by force from the hands of their owners; and now they add to the distress of their victims by imposing upon them five years of tribute. They look upon

the Maronites as slaves conquered at the point of the sword.

"Alas! the poor Maronites send forth their cries, but not one of all the Christian Kings hears them. They ask for pity, but no one has pity on them. They implore compassion, but no one compassionates their misfortunes. They have been degraded and scoffed at before all nations. It is not permitted them to enjoy repose, either by day or by night.

"It is impossible to give a just idea of the losses which we have sustained, while our enemies are still plundering us. We have lost all security. Besides the exaction of the tribute for five years, which they now demand, have we not been placed completely in the power of those cruel enemies, despoilers of our property? They have, a second time, burned the buildings of the episcopal seat, as well as those of the schools which we had restored to their former condition. They have again pillaged everything that belonged either to ourselves or to our college. The value of the different articles which they have stolen from us amounts to the sum of

150,000 piastres, without including the chalices reserved for the episcopal service, the mitre and the cross, the sacerdotal ornaments, the title-deeds of the college and of all the churches in the diocess, and even the large ring which we made use of at the solemnisation of mass. Who wears the ring at the present moment instead of ourselves? The Druse Sheikh Saîd Djoublat, our new governor.*

" Our diocess is now completely abandoned. Its inhabitants are scattered in the solitudes and in the deserts. Their nakedness and their hunger wring our heart. They have only the vault of heaven for a covering, and the wild herbs for nourishment. Those who had the courage to return to their ruined homes, have not found a less miserable fate than that of their wandering brothers. The enemies, determined upon their destruction, left them not even a shelter.

* This is the same man whose agent, Cassim Youssef, conducted the recent massacres at Sidon; whose secretary, Ali Bey Hamâdee, led on the Druses to the slaughter of the Christians at Hasbeiya and Deir-el-Kamr, and to execute whom, according to some Members of Parliament, would be a disgrace to ngland.

" All wait with anxiety the efforts of those who are full of zeal near the Christian kings, to obtain from them pity and compassion, the restitution of our property, and the re-establishment of security. To obtain, in fine, Christian governors, who will rule over us according to our customs and our wants. We all cry with one voice, imploring the mercy of the Most High God, and asking the assistance of all the Christian kings, and of all our brothers, princes, chiefs, bishops, priests; of all the faithful, without excepting even the women, the girls, and children. We address ourselves to all, and we say to them, have compassion upon us, have compassion upon us! Have pity upon us, for we are your brothers; save us from our enemies, the Druses! You have understood all the extent of our misfortunes; you have learned our degradation; you are aware of our poverty and nakedness. Great and small, we implore you all with one voice, with a heart broken and filled with bitterness. We prostrate ourselves at your feet, supplicating you to preserve us from the fury of our foes, to snatch us from the hands of those who hate us, of those

who shed our blood, of those who destroy our country, of those who devour the fruit of our toil, of those who plunder and rob us of all the wealth which we collected together with so much trouble, and by the labour of our whole life! You can protect us; you can re-establish us in our former position, by giving us Christian governors, who will devote themselves to indemnify us for what we have lost. You can have pity on us: and may the All-powerful God, the Master of heaven and earth, grant you, as a recompense, power, strength, and authority over all things.

"But, alas! is it not in vain that we entertain so secret a hope? Have you been distressed at our misfortunes? Have you been indignant at the shedding of our blood, at the dishonour of our wives and daughters, at the massacre of our children? . . . . . And why should it not be so? Are we not your brothers, the children of the same blood, members of the same body? No, no! we will not cease to redouble our cries, and to renew our supplications to the throne of the Most High God, in order that

you may at length have pity and compassion on us.

"The blood of those who have been slaughtered amongst us, the corruption of which our children have been the sad victims, the bones of our dead which appeal to you from their graves, the ashes of those who have been consumed in the flames, all implore and call for assistance. The wailing of our children, the weeping of our disconsolate women, the grief of the orphan, the anguish of the widow, the groans of those who hunger and thirst, the entire Maronite people, the trees, the earth, the heavens, the heights of Mount Lebanon, all cry without ceasing, 'Save us, O kings! O our brothers in Jesus Christ, pity, compassionate, assist, O you who are friends of mercy and of charity! Save us from our miseries! Ah! we beseech you, by the infinite merits of the blood of our divine Saviour, and by his great love, answer our reiterated prayers, receive favourably our supplications, since you are our brothers!' . . . . .

"People of France, it is through fear that you may perhaps rule over this country, that our

jealous and proud enemies have overwhelmed us with so many evils, degraded us, and so cruelly oppressed us. Hasten to our assistance, for if you tarry much longer we shall all perish, and your aid will arrive after the death and complete annihilation of the Maronites. Then, at the day of the last judgment, when we shall all stand in presence of the Great God, he will demand from you an account of our blood, of our ruin, of our miseries, and of our sorrows, which surpass all description."

In the year 1848, the Maronites again appealed to the French government, and forwarded a petition, in which they attributed all their misfortunes to the abandonment of Mount Lebanon by France.

"Behold," they say, "the cause of the misery and all the ruin which has befallen us; of the blood which has been shed; of the burnings of our houses; of the profanation of our churches; of the dishonour of our virgin daughters; of the massacre of our children, cut in two by the swords of the savage Druses." . . . .

Since that time, France has spoken upon various occasions, and has raised her voice on

behalf of the suffering Maronites; but the recent crimes which have been committed, filled, not alone France, but all Europe with a legitimate indignation, and it became necessary no longer to speak, but to act with promptitude and decision.

It would, however, be most unjust if we were, for a moment, to suppose that the indignation felt by Europe was not equally shared in by the Sultan, as every one who possesses any knowledge of His Majesty is well aware of his gentle and generous disposition, and how much he has been grieved at the barbarities that have taken place. The telegraphic despatch addressed by the Porte to its ambassador at Paris, dated 26th day of July last, expresses, to a certain extent, the sentiments of His Majesty:—

"The painful events which have recently occurred in Syria," says the Porte, "have moved no one more deeply than His Majesty the Sultan. A severe chastisement shall be inflicted upon the authors of these crimes, upon all those who have served them as instruments, and also upon the authorities who have failed in their duty. Fuad Pasha has received full powers, and

a sufficient force has been assigned him for that purpose. The affair will soon, therefore, with the assistance of God, receive a solution conformable to the compassionate sentiments of the Sultan, to the desires of all intelligent Mussulmans, and to the wishes of Europe. M. de Lavellette has communicated to the Sublime Porte a telegram which he has received from his government relative to the sending of an European commission into Syria, to make, in concert with the Ottoman authorities, an inquiry into the causes of these events, and to revise the arrangements of 1845; also, relative to the expedition of a body of troops into Syria, for the purpose of lending assistance to the Sublime Porte, in virtue of a convention to be concluded between them and the great Powers. The Council of Ministers have deliberated upon these propositions. The sending of the commission has met with no objection; but, as to the expedition of foreign troops into Syria, under present circumstances, we have submitted to the representatives of France and England at Constantinople considerations of the highest importance, and the latest

information received by the Sublime Porte gives us the certainty that the forces of the Sultan, which are at present in that country, will be amply sufficient to provide for all the exigencies of the moment, and to accomplish the end which His Majesty the Sultan and his allies have in view. Nevertheless, if, when the question is discussed at Paris, by the plenipotentiaries of the great Powers, friends and allies of the Sublime Porte, it shall be considered necessary to send a body of European troops into Syria, to act in concert with the Commissioners of the Sublime Porte, in order promptly and completely to establish peace, tranquillity, and the authority of His Majesty the Sultan, then, in that case, you are authorised, by order of His Majesty, to negotiate and to sign a convention upon the following basis:—The movement and the action of the expeditionary corps shall take place in concert with the Ottoman authority. The number of this corps shall be fixed after a consideration of the actual state of affairs. The evacuation shall take place within a certain time, to be decided upon by the convention."

The following is the text of the convention which was accordingly agreed to by the ministers plenipotentiary of the great powers, sitting in conference at Paris :—

"His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, being desirous of arresting by prompt and efficacious measures the effusion of blood in Syria, and of showing his firm determination to ensure peace and order among the populations subject to his suzerainty; and their Majesties the Emperors of France and Austria, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of Russia, having offered their active co-operation, which has been accepted by His Majesty the Sultan—their said Majesties and His Royal Highness have resolved to conclude a convention to this effect:—

"Art. 1. A corps of European troops, which may be made up to the number of 12,000 men, shall be despatched to Syria to contribute towards the re-establishment of tranquillity.

"Art. 2. His Majesty the Emperor of the French agrees to furnish immediately half the

specified number of troops. Should it become necessary to augment the above troops to the number stipulated in the preceding article, the great Powers, without delay, will come to an understanding with the Porte on this subject by ordinary diplomatic means, and by nomination between themselves of those who have power to contribute contingents.

"Art. 3. The commander-in-chief of the expedition, on his arrival, shall enter into communication with the Extraordinary Commissioners of the Porte, in order to unite in executing measures which the exigencies of circumstances may demand, and to make arrangements calculated to fulfil the object of the present act.

"Art. 4. Their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of the French, the Queen of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, agree to provide a sufficient naval force for aiding the combined efforts for securing tranquillity on the Syrian coast.

"Art. 5. All parties in accord have agreed that

a six months' occupation by European troops will be sufficient for the proposed pacification of Syria.

"Art. 6. The Sublime Porte engages to facilitate the providing for the expeditionary corps.

"Art. 7. The present convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Paris within a period of . . . . In witness of which the respective plenipotentiaries have signed and attached their seals.

"Done at Paris, Sept. 5, 1860.

(Signed)	"Ahmed Vefyk.	"Cowley.
	"Metternich.	"Reuss.
	"Thouvenel.	"Kisseleff."

The French troops are now in Syria, where they have been received with joy and exultation by the Christians, and with every mark of respect and good faith by the authorities of the Sultan. Fuad Pasha, in a recent address, informed the Turkish army that some French and English troops were about to arrive in Syria, as the Powers of Europe, in their constant desire to see the country in a state of tranquillity, were anxious

to aid in repressing the disorders that had taken place; while the Ottoman Government, in order to show the confidence which it reposes in its allies, has accepted their assistance. "You are aware," he continues to say, "that these troops belong to those same Powers that on a former occasion afforded us so much assistance. You will, then, fulfil towards them the duties of good comrades. You are at home, and these troops will be your guests. You will discharge, then, the duties which hospitality imposes, and they will see how you appreciate the sentiments of justice of our sovereign, and how much you respect military discipline and honour. They will see that you have no need to be seconded in punishing the authors of the crimes committed against the Christians, who are your fellow-countrymen equally with ourselves, nor encouraged in executing vengeance in the name of humanity."

Fuad Pasha has shown that the confidence reposed in him by the Sultan was not misplaced, and the Turkish troops, according to his prediction, have done their duty. Those persons who

proclaimed that the Turkish soldiers would not fire upon Mussulmans, have found themselves exceedingly mistaken; for not only were one hundred and eleven Moslems executed at Damascus on the 20th of August last, but even the ex-Governor-General himself. Achmed Pasha, together with Osman Bey, Mohammed-Ali Bey, and Abdul-Selam Bey, the colonels who commanded at Hasbeiya, Rasheiya, and Deir-el-Kamr, all these officers suffered death on the 7th instant and fell by the hands of their co-religionists. The punishment of the guilty, although a necessary, is not, however, the only duty which the Porte and its allies have now to perform. The final settlement of the Syrian question is yet to be arranged by the European commission, and the measures which must be taken to prevent a recurrence of such atrocities as have lately startled Christendom, will require mature deliberation, and will certainly not be less important in their results than the mere execution of a temporary vengeance.

The Maronites do not dream of acquiring a complete independence, or of withdrawing them-

selves from the sovereignty of the Sultan. That, they know, would be an impossibility, because Europe, or rather the four great Powers, have shown by their acts, how much they value the preservation of the Ottoman Empire; and the Emperor Napoleon, at the moment when his troops embarked for Syria, declared that they went there not as enemies, but as auxiliaries of the Sultan, the interest of France being to maintain the integrity of Turkey.

It would, however, be neither incompatible with their character of subjects of the Sublime Porte, nor contrary to the interests of the Ottoman government, if the Christians of Syria were permitted to protect themselves; for it is contrary to all reason and justice, that a minority of the population should possess the power of oppressing the majority, and thus keep a country in a state of continual misery and wretchedness, which, otherwise, would be one of the richest as it is one of the fairest and most beautiful.

The population of Mount Lebanon amounts to a total of 211,000, viz.:—

	In the Christian Kaimacamat.	Under Druse Rule.	Total.
Maronites	80,000	32,000	112,000
Greeks, Orthodox	34,000	6,000	40,000
,, Catholic	12,000	6,000	18,000
Druses	4,000	24,000	28,000
Metuâlis	5,500	2,000	7,500
Mussulmans	1,500	4,000	5,500
Total	137,000	74,000	211,000

The Druses, it will be seen, number only 28,000;—exclusive of their brethren in the Anti-Lebanon and the Haurân,—and the most prudent course, therefore, to adopt, would be to separate them altogether from the Christians, for peace and security can never be perfectly ensured in Mount Lebanon as long as these two races, so dissimilar in religion and character, are compelled to remain together. Let the lands of the Druses be fairly valued, and the amount equitably assessed upon the Maronites. Let the Druses of Lebanon retire altogether to the Haurân, where, with the compensation they shall have received, they can readily establish themselves. Then, the Maronites, ruled over, as formerly, by a Christian governor, will become free and happy, and the Lebanon will once more give signs of that activity

and industry for which its inhabitants were so remarkable. If, however, the policy of any of the great Powers render this project impracticable, measures should, at least, be taken to prevent the recurrence of those frightful atrocities which have for the past fifteen years desolated the Lebanon, and the Christians of Syria should be placed in such a position as would enable them no longer to fear the attacks of their enemies.

The population of Syria is estimated at 1,700,000, viz. :—

Mussulmans	946,000
Christians	500,000
Jews	24,000
Druses	80,000
Metuâlis	50,000
Ansairîans	100,000
	1,700,000

The Druses and Mussulmans are generally fully armed, while the Christians are usually without any weapons of defence. The entire population ought to be placed upon the same equality in this respect, and therefore it should be made penal

for any one, whether Mussulman or Christian, to carry arms unless duly authorised. A Turkish Governor-General, appointed by the Porte, should have a sufficient number of troops at his command so as to enable him to keep the Druses and the various Moslem races in subjection to the Sultan; while a Christian Governor of Lebanon should be allowed to organise an armed force capable of protecting the people under his jurisdiction. Upon this point I am able to place before you the opinions of the Syrians themselves, and which, coming from those most interested, deserve some respect and consideration.

The Christians of Syria demand that the creation of a Christian army, by means of conscription, shall be at once agreed upon. Each year there shall be embodied a certain number of Christians in proportion to the population. It is estimated that two thousand men can be enrolled every year, so that at the end of five years there would be an available force of ten thousand troops. Each year two thousand men shall be discharged and replaced by two thousand new recruits, so that, at the end of fifteen years, there

will be then in Syria thirty thousand Christians exercised in the use of arms. An indispensable condition to the success of this plan is, that the military instructors of these soldiers shall be Christians, and that the regiments shall live altogether apart from the Mussulmans, under a separate and distinct administration. Thus, ten thousand regular troops, with a reserve of twenty thousand men, will form a force sufficient to secure the efficacious protection of the Christians, provided that they also furnish a moiety of the irregular troops and of the local militia. Then the country will no longer be at the mercy, as it has been up to the present, of the implacable enemies of humanity, as well as of the real interests of the Ottoman government.

There is nothing exorbitant in these demands, and unless they are complied with it will be impossible to realise the generous promises made by His Majesty in the hatti-scherif which he promulgated upon his accession to the throne, nor can the hatti-humayoun of 1856 ever be executed in Syria. If the intentions manifested by the Sultan be fulfilled, and if they be really

put in practice, according to the means above stated, then in that case the Christians can look forward to their future with confidence; but if the contrary should, unfortunately, occur, no one can refuse to them the right of demanding the protection of the great Powers for their persons and property, or that they may be able to leave their country and seek elsewhere for that which they can no longer find at home. Why should they remain in Syria, only to find a grave? Those who fell in the recent massacres, fell martyrs to their faith and to their innocence. They showed themselves unshaken at the moment when a great and unexpected misfortune assailed them. But it would be no longer the same, if, forgetting such a sad and terrible experience, the survivors permitted themselves to be overtaken by the same disasters. They would no more find the crown of the martyr, but receive the merited price of a carelessness and an apathy inexcusable.

To abandon their native land is an alternative to which the great European powers would not wish to reduce this unfortunate people, and for

the honour of civilisation and of the Christian name, the Christians of Syria hope that arrangements will be at once made so as to secure to them the means of, henceforth, defending their honour and their life.

LETTER XII.

SYRIA PAST AND PRESENT.

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September* 26, 1860.

WHEN Greece was in her infancy, and long before Rome had ever been founded, the coast of Syria was covered with magnificent and wealthy cities. On the north stood Aradus (the modern Ronad); eighteen miles to the south, Tripolis; at a similar distance Byblos (Djebail), with the temple of Adonis; again, further south Berytus (Beyrout); at a like distance Sidon; and, finally, about fifteen miles further stood the "Queen of the Waters," the stately Tyre. From the latter city arose commerce, civilisation, the arts and sciences, and, above all, that great instrument of social progress, the gift of letters. To its inhabitants, the Phœnicians, we are indebted for the knowledge of astronomy and arithmetic, as

well as for the discovery of weights and measures, of money, of the art of keeping accounts or book-keeping; for the invention, or at least for the improvement, of ship-building and navigation, and likewise for the discovery of glass. They were also famous for the manufacture of fine linen and tapestry; for the art of working in metals and ivory; for their skill in architecture, and especially for the manufacture of that rare and costly article of luxury, the Tyrian purple.

A new and formidable rival, however, at length competed with Tyre, and the trade of the latter became, to a considerable extent, transferred to that great city founded by the Macedonian conqueror. Nevertheless, when subsequently reduced to a Roman province (B.C. 65), Syria lost nothing of her material prosperity; for the commerce which created her wealth, far from decreasing, received an unexpected impulse, and found a new source of profit in the luxurious habits of her masters. Another and a more remunerative market was immediately opened, as the conquerors, having once tasted the delights of Asia, soon felt wants unknown to their frugal fore-

fathers, and eagerly demanded her perfumes, her silks, and her precious stones, which they paid for with the spoils of the world. The ports of Syria continued to send forth argosies filled with rich and costly merchandise; with gold, silver, tin, and other metals; with vessels of brass, slaves, mules, sheep, and goats; pearls, precious stones, and coral; wheat, balm, honey, oil, spices, gums, wove silk, and wine. Berytus (Beyrout) was famous for her immense exportation of corn, oil, and the choicest wines. The cedars of Lebanon furnished the Romans with wood for the manufacture of magnificent ornaments, as well as for the domestic architecture of the rich, and the adornment of the temples of their gods. The dates of Syria were well-known; for Galen, in one of his treatises, mentions their properties, and compares them with those of Egypt. The plums and other fruits of Damascus appeared, among various exotic luxuries, upon the tables of the epicures; and Virgil tells us of a delicious species of pear, the cultivation of which had been, in his time, introduced into Italy; while from the first day of the empire, the Tyrian

purple was used to cover the tables and beds, and sometimes, as Horace says, it served the purposes of splendid poverty, and veiled with a gaudy covering the emptiness of fallen greatness.

But this prosperity, of such rapid growth, was of short duration; for with the invasion of Islam and the fall of the Roman ascendancy (A. D. 638), came a long and dreary period of desolation and despair. The religion of Mohammed made little difference in the instincts and ferocity of the Arab tribes, except, perhaps, to add the force of mad fanaticism to mere savage brutality, and impel them to conquest or massacre as a duty, whereas, before, they had been incited only by cupidity or want. Inspired with a fiery zeal and a contempt of death, the spoilers, more fierce and greedy in their thirst for plunder, than even former invaders had shown themselves, rushed like tigers upon their prey. They laid waste far and near with fire and sword; destroying utterly whatever they could not appropriate, setting fire to whatever would burn, and razing to the ground whatever could be thrown down. Statues, buildings, books, pictures, all shared in one common

destruction; every work of art and every useful contrivance, the appliances of science, the implements of trade, all disappeared together, as a crop of vegetation after a visit of locusts. They found a garden, but they made a desert.

Under the reign of the Caliphs, however, commerce again revived, and civilisation, awaking from its trance, put forth tenfold vigour, making greater progress in two centuries than the world had seen before. The cities of Syria were again embellished, an architecture of the highest order lent its charm to the buildings, and everything that human ingenuity could accomplish, was effected for the prosperity and welfare of the country. All our histories contain accounts of the presents sent to Charlemagne by the great Haroun-al-Raschid, that prince who has ever been, to our imagination, the embodiment of all that is grand, wonderful, and magnificent. Among these presents were perfumes of every kind, a profusion of pearls and jewels, an elephant richly caparisoned for war, and a clock, which appeared a wonder in Europe, then in a semi-barbarous state, and which was placed in

the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. Haroun-al-Raschid, although he had to pay an army of five hundred thousand soldiers, although he had built many palaces in different parts of his empire, was yet able to give his grandson, Al-Mamoun, two millions four hundred thousand denarii of gold; and when this magnificent prince was married, they placed upon the head of his bride a thousand pearls of the most beautiful water, and opened a lottery in which each prize gained either a house or a piece of land. But all this splendour vanished before the hordes of Othman; and with the occupation of Syria by the Turks (A. D. 1517), set in a gloomy night of darkness, unrelieved, during more than three hundred years, by a single glimpse of light or the faintest gleam of hope.

Nevertheless, the Syria of to-day is as rich and fertile as the Syria of twelve hundred years ago. Upon her fruitful soil, wheat, barley, maize, rice, cotton, spring up with the same luxuriant abundance. The sugar-cane and tobacco, those two modern sources of wealth, abound; and the white mulberry trees afford food for myriads of

silkworms, which supply the manufactories of Lyons with their precious products. Limestone, sandstone, basalt, slate, coal, iron, and copper, are plentiful in the mountain districts; timber of every description, from the cedar to the oak, from the plane to the pine, may be had for the felling; while sycamores of enormous size spread their branches wide enough to cover a whole caravan with their grateful shade. Here are valleys where everything that is useful or beautiful in the vegetable kingdom is found in the natural, unforced produce of the soil, spread out in rich and prodigal abundance. Here are gardens where the rose, the orange-flower, the jasmine, mingle their perfumes into one delicious odour, almost too powerful for the senses. Avenues of fig-trees shade the roads; growths of oleander follow the course of the rivers; red-flowered grass blends its hues with a thousand gay flowers that enamel the meadows; above is the blue vault of heaven, and between stretches the ocean of clear, pellucid atmosphere. In the poetry of the Turks, this favoured region has been called "the odour of paradise;" in that of

the Hebrews, "a garden planted by God for the first man;" and in that of the Arabs it is described as a country "where the mountains bear winter on their heads, spring upon their shoulders, autumn around their bosoms, while summer is ever sleeping at their feet."

Previously to the recent disturbances, a very extraordinary improvement in the commercial prosperity of Syria was everywhere apparent, despite the disadvantages arising from a want of that internal communication which is so necessary to the extension of trade. For example, in the year 1851, the imports at Aleppo amounted only to 486,060*l.*, whereas in 1855, they increased to 1,414,059*l.* In 1854, the exports were 993,630*l.*, but in 1855, they amounted to 1,254,130*l.* At Beyrout, the imports in 1841, were only 66,748*l.*; in the year 1848, they had increased to 546,266*l.*; in the year 1853, they amounted to 722,864*l.*; in 1856, to 1,162,676*l.*; in 1857, to 1,324,550*l.*; while during the past year they still further increased to 1,448,860*l.* The exports in 1841, amounted only to 25,128*l.*; in 1848, they were 253,648*l.*; in the year 1853,

they increased to 624,544*l.*; in 1856, to 795,657*l.*; in 1857, to 983,398*l.*, and in the year 1859, to 1,698,456*l.* At Alexandretta, Latakia, Tripolis, Sidon, Tyre, Kaïffa, and Jaffa, signs of an increasing commerce were also evident, and, if peace were now secured to the people upon an equitable basis, and the Arab tribes held in subjection by a firm and strong-handed governor, the country would soon resume its former activity, trade would revive, and plenty would again spread happiness over the land. The traffic between India and Europe, so long carried on through the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, is gradually returning to its more direct and natural course; and it is by no means improbable that the route by the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf will shortly prove to be the best and cheapest, as it is decidedly the shortest. The royal cities of Nineveh and Babylon are, it is true, no more, and the mean towns of Mosul and Hillah alone mark the places where they stood; but the great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, which contributed to their grandeur, still flow onwards to the sea. The Jordan,

although only sixty feet wide, is, however, in some places, twenty feet deep, and might easily be rendered navigable; while the Orontes rushes through the plain with a velocity and a headlong impetus that have induced the Arabs to call it El-'Asy, or The Rebel. The maritime cities of Syria are despoiled and neglected. Tyre, whose "merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth," has become "a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea;" but the old Berytus still remains, bereft, to a great extent, of her artificial splendour, yet possessing those natural beauties which time cannot destroy, and reviving, by her increasing trade, the memory of the vast commerce which she once enjoyed, and that greatness to which, from the advantages of her position, she is now again so likely to attain. The eyes of Europe are, once more, eagerly turned towards this land for whose deliverance the proud chivalry of Christendom once shed its blood and won its victories in vain. This land, endeared by so many hallowed recollections, made famous by the super-human prowess of a Richard Cœur-

de-Lion and a Salah-ed-Dîn; this land, teeming with untold wealth, and whose soil bursts spontaneously with productiveness, is now being quietly and gradually occupied by the descendants of those who, nearly eight hundred years ago, fought and fell upon its plains; and civilisation—which here had its birth, but which fled in terror before rude and ignorant barbarians, finding a refuge in the west—is now coming back again upon the wings of peace, seeking for its ancient but still remembered home.

THE END.

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